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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you support legislation increasing by as much as 50 percent fines for speed violations?

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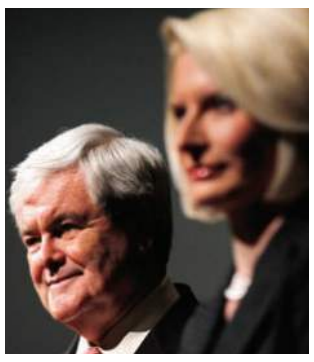
NATION



Newt Gingrich angrily denies that he asked his second wife for an "open marriage." ➤ PAGE 14

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Time ticks for House reapportionment plan

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

» Proposal seeks to cut Saipan House members from 18 to 9

Time is ticking for the Legislature to come up with a House of Representatives seat reapportionment or redistricting plan within 120 days from the publication of Census 2010 results. Failure to do so could pave the way for Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to do it himself or voters could ask the court to do it. Some lawmakers, however, are unsure whether the 120-day period started on Aug. 24, 2011, or on Jan. 5, 2012.

Palacios

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Merrill Lynch fights back, sues Fund

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

New York-based Merrill Lynch, the former investment consultant of the NMI Retirement Fund that is being blamed for the staggering losses incurred by the Fund's portfolio, is lashing back with its own lawsuit against the Fund.

In the lawsuit it filed yesterday in federal court, it is suing the Fund over the filing of lawsuits against the company without arbitration.

Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Smith Inc., collectively known as Merrill Lynch, is also suing the Fund board of trustees, former Fund employee Mariano Taitano, former CNMI Ports Authority employee Roman T. Tudela, and current Commonwealth Utilities Corp. employee Patricia Guerrero.

Taitano, Tudela, and Guerrero, all Fund beneficiaries, have a pending lawsuit in the Superior Court against Merrill Lynch and the Fund.

Merrill Lynch, through counsel Sean E. Frink, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to declare Public Law 17-

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New plant discovered in Fiji

The newly discovered flower system.
MARIKA TUIWAWA

SUVA, Fiji—A new flowering plant belonging to the *Medinilla* plant group has been discovered in the highlands of Matasawalevu village, on the island of Kadavu in Fiji.

The plant was found during a biodiversity assessment of the Nakasaleka district carried out as part of the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Water and Nature Initiative, or WANI.

There are around 193 known species of *Medinilla*, occurring in Madagascar, Africa, South Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Of the 193 species, 11 can only be found in Fiji. One of them is the Tagimoucia flower, *Medinilla waterhousei*, the floral emblem of Fiji.

IUCN's WANI works with local communities to help them better manage water resources on Kadavu island. The team was monitoring the degradation of the river basin in the area when the new plant was discovered.

"The discovery of this previously unknown species of plant gives us a sense of just how fragile nature can be," said Dr. Milika Sobey, Water and Wetlands Program coordinator at IUCN's Oceania Regional Office. "The fact that it was found during work on a watershed management project is one more lesson in how important it is that nature is included in the priorities for water management."

The species was found on the border of grassland and primary forest. This

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Local

CBP's cultural sensitivity training wrapped up this week

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection confirmed yesterday that the "cultural sensitivity training" for CBP officers stationed on Saipan wrapped up this week amid complaints by lawmakers about some federal officers' "rude" treatment of visitors to the CNMI.

Lawmakers, meanwhile, said yesterday that while this cultural sensitivity training should have started even before the federal government took control of CNMI borders on Nov. 28, 2009, they are glad that CBP or the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has addressed the CNMI's concerns.

Edward Low, public affairs liaison at the CBP-San Francisco Field Office, said a trainer from Honolulu, Hawaii "just completed four training sessions this week, reaching almost all CBP employees in the CNMI, save those on leave."

CBP, however, could not say how many CBP officers actually underwent the training.

Low, who was on Saipan for the November 2009 federal takeover, said the material covered in the training "will be incorporated into CBP's regular duty musters."

"The training focused on the fact that different countries have different cultures, and that what may be an innocent gesture or comment in one culture may be interpreted as hostile or offensive in another," Low told *Saipan Tribune.*

He also said the training primarily focused on Korean and Japanese cultures.

The CNMI's main tourism markets are Japan and Korea.

Betsy Markey, DHS assistant secretary for the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, told Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) in a December response letter that CBP takes seriously allegations of employee misconduct and has instituted policies pertaining to abuses of authority.

CBP's Low reiterated yesterday that "due to U.S. Privacy Act restrictions, I cannot reveal what actions may have been directed at CBP employees as a result of a CBP investigation of allegations of misconduct."

Tenorio said yesterday he appreciates CBP's move, which he said was more than what he expected.

"I didn't really expect that they would do that—conduct a cultural sensitivity training. I was expecting that they would only issue a memo notifying everyone to be nice to tourists but they did a lot more than that. I thank them and appreciate them for that," the former governor and speaker said last night.

Senate Vice President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian), who was among those who complained to DHS about long lines, delays, and "callous demeanor" of CBP officers at the Saipan airport in April/May 2011, said yesterday that "hopefully, after the training is done," there will no longer be complaints from tourists, foreign investors, and residents against passenger treatment of CBP officers at the airport.

"The CNMI's main industry is tourism, and how we treat visitors at the airport could really affect our tourism. I believe the officers at the airport could really treat every customer, every tourist in a professional manner without compromising their responsibility of protecting our border from bad elements," Hofschneider said.

The senator said he will continue to emphasize the need to "work together"—CNMI and federal agencies—in balancing security with tourism concerns.

"Overall, I am happy they've undergone this training which they brought up earlier," he said.

Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), chairman of the House Committee on Commerce and Tourism, separately said a cultural sensitivity training "should have been done a long time ago" but is thankful something has been done to address complaints from passengers.

"I believe that these officers can protect our borders without being rude or harsh. I hope they take the training to heart," the freshman lawmaker added.

Since the pullout of the garment industry, the CNMI has relied mostly on its fragile tourism to fuel its economy.

November 2011 arrivals, for example, were up only by a slight 8 percent compared to the previous year or from 27,179 to 29,275.

Meanwhile, President Barack Obama announced new initiatives to significantly increase travel and tourism in the United States as part of a comprehensive effort to spur job creation.

The U.S. tourism and travel industry is a substantial component of U.S. gross domestic product and employment, representing 2.7 percent of GDP

See CBP on Page 4

Insuring your personal property

Cover your personal assets

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Aside from the home that you worked so hard to build, the contents that make it complete may have equal or greater value. The market value of such property and the memories built around them will make it worth insuring. If you already own a homeowner's insurance policy, find out if your personal assets are covered.

How insurance companies determine the value of your personal property

Most insurance companies would require a full inventory of your household to ensure that you have all your personal contents covered. From bedroom furniture to kitchen utensils, everything in your home is considered something of value. To determine the value of each item, you may be asked for sales receipts or an appraisal value from a licensed appraiser. The work to gather the information may require some effort and time, but it will be worth it in the end. However, there are some items, such as historical art pieces and jewelry that may be uninsurable.

When you are away from home

Most homeowner's insurance policy will cover your personal property when you are away from home if contents were included. This means that if your insured laptop was stolen while vacationing in Japan, you can file a claim to recover the loss. If you did not provide a sales receipt or an appraisal document for the laptop, you may be required to present one to properly determine the value of the stolen item. In most cases, you will have to pay a deductible amount. This amount can be found in your policy. ***(Pacifica Insurance)***

For more information on insuring your personal property, call Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc. at 234-6267 or visit their office located at Joeten Center in Susupe. You may also visit www.pacificains.com or send an inquiry via email to piui@pacificains.com. Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc. is a general agent for Century Insurance and Tokio Marine Pacific Insurance Limited.

Aldan quits Commonwealth Election Commission board

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

After a decade of being on the Commonwealth Election Commission's board of directors, Elizabeth Aldan has resigned, bringing to three the number of vacancies on the board.

Board chair Frances Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* that Aldan resigned in August last year but the information was not formally discussed with the full board due to a lack of quorum in previous months.

Sablan described Aldan's departure as "untimely" considering the 2012 midterm election in November. The board needs two appointments for Saipan and one from Tinian.

It was learned that Aldan was on the commission's board from June 2001 to Aug. 19, 2011. Sablan described her as a dedicated and committed commissioner with only the best interest of the public in mind.

The board plans to present Aldan with a plaque of appreciation at their next meeting.

During Wednesday's board meeting, the board unanimously voted to retain Sablan as chairperson, along with vice chair Josepha Barcinas.

Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* that it is her goal to complete the nine-member board before the midterm elections.

She disclosed that all current commissioners have been recommended for re-appointment by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, emphasizing the importance of having members knowledgeable in all rules and issues surrounding the election.

Compared to other board and commissions, Sablan the Election Commission needs three quarters of the full membership to pass a decision, which means six to seven members are needed to vote in the affirmative. Five members, meantime, are needed to be present in order to get a quorum.

The board is composed of nine members, of whom five represent Saipan and two each represent Tinian and Rota. They are appointed by the governor and have four-year terms.

Aside from Sablan and Barcinas, the other board members are Jose Kiyoshi, Jesus Sablan, Leilani Manglona, and Antonio Agulto.

WIA TRAINING NMC

Northern Marianas College Community Development Institute program manager Les Ogumoro-Uludong, bottom row, far right, and Workforce Investment Agency case manager Frances Torres, bottom row, far left, are shown with participants who recently completed WIA's Basic Work Skills and Computer Literacy Training. The 15 participants were referred by WIA and the training was offered through CDI, a program under the Division of Community Programs and Services.

Kagman house burglarized

Police arrested on Thursday two suspected burglars who allegedly broke into a house in Kagman III and stole several items in two duffle bags.

John Ilo Jr., 23, and Felix Muna Kileleman, 18, were arrested for burglary and theft. Bail was set yesterday at $10,000 cash for each suspect. Preliminary hearing will be on Jan. 26 at 9am.

Police reports state that two officers had responded to a house in Kagman III on Tuesday at 11:06pm due to an alleged burglary. The homeowner told the officers that his residence had been burglarized and that a female witness saw two persons leaving the place earlier. The witness allegedly saw Ilo and Kileleman carrying two duffle bags.

The officers learned that the window screen at the back of the house had been cut open. The northern end of the laundry room door was also open.

At the time, the victim told police he does not know what items were stolen as he had immediately called for police assistance.

The two officers later proceeded to Kileleman's residence in Kagman where they met the two suspects. Police said that upon questioning by the officers, the two confessed to burglarizing the victim's house and stealing several items.

A crime scene technician returned some of the recovered items to the victim, but still missing are a small bolt cutter, a wedding ring, 10 Gerber knives, and three folding chairs, all valued at $1,510. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Lawsuit of man who claimed brain injury dismissed

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona dismissed yesterday for lack of prosecution a lawsuit filed by a man who claimed that he sustained a brain injury due to many years of exposure to solvents at his jobsite at the Power Plant 4 in Puerto Rico, Saipan.

Manglona dismissed without prejudice Adolfo M. Lumbad's lawsuit that was filed on Dec. 10, 2008. Dismissed without prejudice means the plaintiff can re-file a new lawsuit on the same claim in the future.

In dismissing the case, Manglona said that Lumbad has not filed a motion or other response to her order to show cause why the case should not be dismissed for lack of prosecution.

Lumbad filed the case *pro se* or without a lawyer more than three years ago. With no action in the case, Manglona issued the order to show cause on Dec. 30. In that order, the judge gave Lumbad until Jan. 13, 2012, to respond in writing.

Manglona pointed out that if a proceeding has been pending for more than six months without any action taken by the parties, the court may dismiss the proceeding for lack of prosecution.

Lumbad sued Pacific Marine and Industrial Corp. for alleged violation of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, differential treatment on medical benefits, termination based on disability, breach of contract, violation of Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and infliction of emotional distress.

PMIC operates Power Plant 4.

Lumbad filed the lawsuit when he was 57. He alleged that his employer terminated him as a mechanic/waste material recycler due to his disability and age. He demanded payment for damages, costs of medical care, lost earnings and employment benefits, and court costs.

Lumbad alleged that he was employed with PMIC as a mechanic but was assigned to work at its chemical and hazardous materials section as a material waste recycler since March 2001. He said he was terminated in February 2008. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Store's surveillance camera leads to arrest of man who burglarized car

A store's surveillance camera led to the arrest of an ex-convict who allegedly burglarized a car that was parked in the establishment's parking lot.

James I. Somorang, 42, was arrested on Wednesday for burglary and theft. His bail was set yesterday at $5,500 cash. Preliminary hearing will be on Jan. 26 at 9am.

Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo ordered Somorang to stay away from the victim, XO Market, and its manager.

Police said that an officer had responded to XO Market in Chalan Lau Lau on Jan. 10 after police received a call about a burglary and theft incident.

According to the victim, she had parked her company vehicle at XO Market and when she returned to the car at 2pm her purse was already gone.

When police and the store's manager reviewed the video footage of the surveillance camera, they saw the image of a man walking to the front window of the vehicle, looking inside, and then going to the driver's side. The man opened the door, entered the vehicle, and grabbed a purse. He then closed the door and left.

The manager identified the man as Somorang, who stays across the store and likes to stand outside the store for hours.

That night, police proceeded to Somorang's house and arrested him. The victim's purse was recovered from the suspect's house. Somorang allegedly admitted to taking the purse from the parked vehicle.

Somorang was later released from jail as the case was placed under further investigation. He was served with an arrest warrant on Wednesday. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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Former speaker Guerrero is new MPLT chief

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Members of the Marianas Public Land Trust board unanimously elected former House speaker Pedro Guerrero as their new chairman yesterday.

Guerrero, who succeeds Alvaro Santos to the position, was appointed to the MPLT board in January 2010 and served the unexpired term of former member Norman Tenorio. He is expected to finish his six-year term in 2015.

Besides Guerrero, Tinian representative Peter Cruz was also elected as the organization's new vice chairperson during yesterday's election.

Although vowing to continue the initiatives of the board's former leadership, Guerrero stressed the need to look at the present asset allocation of MPLT and see how this could be expanded to realize the desired investment growth.

He cited as an example, the possibility of investing in real estate which, he said, has been bringing positive results to many pension funds in the United States.

MPLT's total portfolio was valued at $71 million as of Sept. 3, 2011.

Guerrero said it is also his goal to explore alternative investments that would "directly" benefit those of Northern Marianas descent. He said he will encourage his peers to consider putting money in future local investments that will directly help NMDs.

MPLT's funds are sourced from the land lease payments collected annually by the Department of Public Lands. Its board invests these monies mostly in international markets to generate revenue for the government.

At present, MPLT earnings are turned over to the general fund to fund education, health, public safety, and other services. Guerrero is convinced, however, that MPLT provides no direct benefit to NMDs.

"Did they [NMDs] ever receive direct benefits [from MPLT investments]? The answer is no," he said. "Being owned collectively by NMD, I think it's about time we look into providing direct benefits to them through local programs and activities. I know it's hard, it's difficult, but it's a challenge that I want to push and hopefully, my colleagues will support."

Among the programs that he said could be explored by the board are investing in scholarship programs and assisting local business ventures on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

PLANT

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location makes it highly vulnerable to bush fires that are common in the area.

"We only managed to find one plant of this kind," said Marika Tuiwawa of the University of the South Pacific's Institute of Applied Science, IUCN member and partner in the WANI project, who discovered the species. "Commercial agricultural activities and uncontrolled bush fires are the main threats to this species. A simple fire could destroy it in a matter of minutes."

The plant's common name has not been confirmed yet but the name *Medinilla matasawalevu* has been suggested to illustrate its location.

"The fact that only one plant of this kind was found so far and that it occurs in such a vulnerable place should set alarm bells ringing," says Jane Smart, global director of IUCN's Biodiversity Conservation Group. "The challenge now is to protect the new species and raise awareness of its importance among local communities, to secure its long term future."

Work is currently underway to confirm the exact classification of the new species, for which DNA research may be carried out.

"Through the Water and Nature Initiative IUCN has shown in more than 30 countries worldwide that by working with local people and partners, it is possible to put in place sustainable solutions that meet the water needs of both people and nature," said Dr. Mark Smith, director of the IUCN Global Water Program. ***(IUCN)***

TIME

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Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) said "what we should do now is deliberate on initiatives and bills" that have something to do with reapportionment or redistricting," referring to Rep. Joseph Palacios' (R-Saipan) initiative seeking to reduce the number of House Saipan members from 18 to nine.

Palacios' initiative has yet to be acted on by the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations—almost a year since it was introduced in February 2011.

"If the Legislature does not do anything, then the governor will do it. Or any voter could petition the court if both the Legislature and the governor fail to do anything, just like what happened when former senator [Frica] Pangelinan and Tina Sablan did in 2007," Yumul told *Saipan Tribune.*

Under Article II Section 4(a) of the CNMI Constitution, the Legislature shall, at least every 10 years and within 120 days following publication of the results of the decennial census, reapportion the seats in the House or revise the districts for electing representatives as required by changes in Commonwealth population or by law.

Section 4(b) states that if the Legislature fails to act, the governor shall promulgate a reapportionment or redistricting plan within 120 days after the expiration of the time for the Legislature to act.

Palacios' House Legislative Initiative 17-4 seeks to amend Article 2 Section 4(a) and (b), and create a new subsection to cut the number of Saipan House members from 18 to nine.

Currently, the House has 20 members: 18 from Saipan, and one each from Rota and Tinian.

The initiative seeks only one election district for Saipan instead of the current five, and nine House members will represent that single Saipan district.

Palacios said his initiative will save the CNMI over $1 million.

Yumul said the question is whether the 120-day count began around Aug. 24, 2011, when the U.S. Census Bureau released the CNMI's population count.

In that report, the Census Bureau said the CNMI's population shrunk by 22.2 percent or by 15,338 in a 10-year period—from 69,221 in 2000 to 53,883 on April 1, 2010. That report also revealed the population of every election district in the CNMI.

Around Jan. 5, 2012, the Census Bureau and the CNMI Department of Commerce issued another set of Census 2012 data, this time providing the population count of every village on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Yumul, upon consultation with the House legal counsel, said the 120 days could have started around Jan. 5, 2012.

As of yesterday, the Fitial administration has yet to comment on whether the 120 days started in August or this month.

If another legal opinion states that the 120-day period began in August, then that means that period had already lapsed for the Legislature in December and the governor can come up with his own plan.

Palacios said yesterday that all the Census 2010 data that could help the JGO Committee decide whether to approve or reject his initiative have been released so there's no reason to delay action on it any further.

"The population of the CNMI, especially Saipan, went down and that alone justifies my initiative to reduce the number of House seats for Saipan," Palacios told *Saipan Tribune.*

Saipan's population went down by 22.7 percent or by 14,172—from 62,392 in 2000 to 48,220 in 2010.

Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan), chairman of the JGO Committee, said his panel has started compiling materials needed to decide on Palacios' initiative.

As an individual lawmaker, Demapan supports the proposal to reduce the number of Saipan House members. "But I am just one of the members of the committee. It's not only me to decide, it's the whole committee. But my goal as a JGO Committee chairman is to act on this initiative way before the deadline to be able to have this voted on by voters in the November election," he said.

As for the constitutional timelines on reapportionment and redistricting, Palacios said he has yet to get information about this.

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) said that, while he has yet to find out when, if at all, the Census data was officially released, he supports the idea of having only one election district for Saipan.

"I want to do something with redistricting. I want just one election district on Saipan. That way everyone will be elected by just one district. I am surprised that some members I thought who would not agree with me on this support the idea. To me, the island of Saipan is too small. We fight over money, we fight over local appropriations bills. I don't think we should continue doing that. Everyone should be elected islandwide," he said.

Of Saipan's five election districts or precincts, Precinct 3 is the most populated with 15,624. This precinct covers San Antonio, Koblerville, As Lito, Chalan Piao, Dandan, parts of San Vicente, among other villages.

Precinct 1 is not far behind, with a population of 15,160. Its villages include Garapan, San Jose, Puerto Rico, and portions of Capital Hill.

Precinct 5 is third with a population of 7,207, covering Kagman and portions of San Vicente, among other villages.

Precinct 2 ranks fourth with 6,382 individuals in Chalan Kanoa and Susupe.

Precinct 4 has the smallest population with only 3,847, covering Tanapag, San Roque, As Teo, and Marpi, among other areas.

MERRILL

From Page 1

51 (Derivative Act), as amended by Public Law 17-67, to be null and void as it abrogates the Arbitration Clause in the 1998 and 2007 agreements between Merrill Lynch and the Fund and its board.

Merrill Lynch wants the court to order the Fund, Taitano, Tudela, and Guerrero to arbitrate the claims asserted in the beneficiaries' lawsuit and any others arising between Merrill Lynch and the Fund.

According to Frink, the services provided by Merrill Lynch to the Fund included strategic allocation modeling, assistance with selection of investment managers, and investment policy advice. Merrill Lynch itself was not an investment manager or adviser for the Fund, and has no discretionary authority over the Fund's investments, he added.

Merrill Lynch's relationship with the Fund is governed by an agreement titled the "Merrill Lynch Consulting Services Agreement," first executed in 1998 then amended in 2007. Both agreements, Frink said, have an arbitration clause, which provides that "all controversies which may arise between Merrill Lynch and the Fund shall be resolved by arbitration."

Taitano, Tudela, and Guerrero sued Merrill Lynch and the Fund's board in October 2009, seeking damages against Merrill Lynch and the board related to investment advice allegedly provided to the board by Merrill Lynch, based on alleged injuries suffered by beneficiaries. The lawsuit asserted several causes of action against Merrill Lynch, including breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty, negligence, and malpractice. The complaint also alleged that the Fund failed to seek available remedies for Merrill Lynch's alleged breaches of duty.

In June 2011, the Fund board filed a cross-claim against Merrill Lynch, essentially asserting the same claims. The board then filed a motion for summary judgment against Taitano, Tudela, and Guerrero, seeking to exclude them from the suit for lack of standing. The motion remains pending before the Superior Court.

In the beneficiaries lawsuit, Merrill Lynch has taken the position that Taitano, Tudela, and Guerrero are at best third-party beneficiaries and that they are therefore bound by the terms of the Agreements.

Taitano, Tudela, and Guerrero responded that the Arbitration Clause is invalid in the CNMI and that the Federal Arbitration Act does not apply.

On Sept. 5, 2011, then acting governor Eloy Inos signed into law P.L. 17-51, the "Retirement Fund Beneficiary Derivative Lawsuit Act of 2011." That law declared that Fund beneficiaries could sue on behalf of the Fund. Frink said that P.L. 17-51 also purported, among other things, to abrogate the existing statute of limitations and replace it with a 12-year statute of limitations.

The lawyer said the intent of the Legislature in enacting Section 103 of P.L. 17-51 was to abrogate key provisions of the 1998 and 2007 Agreements.

Frink noted that the original version of the bill, as passed by the CNMI Senate, expressly announced its purpose as to "hold money managers responsible" to the Fund.

The 1998 and 2007 Agreements, Frink said, obligate the Fund to arbitrate "all controversies" with Merrill Lynch. He said that P.L. 17-51, as amended by P.L. 17-67, purports to excuse the Fund, Taitano, Tudela, and Guerrero from arbitrating claims against Merrill Lynch.

"Public Law 17-51, as amended by Public Law 17-67, was a special-interest legislation that purports to affect the enforceability only of the Fund's contracts, and not the contracts of any other retirement fund or trust in the CNMI, and specially the Fund's 1998 and 2007 Agreements with Merrill Lynch," Frink said.

Frink said as an unreasonable impairment of the obligation of contracts, P.L. 17-51, as amended by P.L. 17-67, violates the Contracts Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

By failing to press the Fund's claims in arbitration, the lawyer said, the board has permitted the Beneficiaries to seek judicial resolution, pursuant to P.L. 17-51, of the Fund's disputes with Merrill Lynch.

Frink said P.L. 17-51, as amended by P.L. 17-67, purports to abrogate the Arbitration Clause in the 1998 and 2007 Agreements.

"The board's decision to yield the Fund's claims to the Beneficiaries, who may take advantage of Public Law 17-51, as amended by Public Law 17-67, effectuates the impairment of contract that the CNMI legislature prescribed," he said.

CBP

From Page 2

and 7.5 million jobs in 2010—with international travel to the United States supporting 1.2 million jobs alone. The travel and tourism industry projects that more than 1 million American jobs could be created over the next decade if the U.S. increased its share of the international travel market.

Obama's executive order charges the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior in co-leading an interagency task force to develop recommendations for a National Travel and Tourism Strategy to promote domestic and international travel opportunities throughout the United States, thereby expanding job creation.

Villagomez said the CNMI should learn more about this so it can also be included in the program.

A particular focus of the Task Force will be on strategies for increasing tourism and recreation jobs by promoting visits to our national treasures. The Department of the Interior manages iconic destinations in national parks, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, monuments and other public lands that attract travelers from around the country and the globe.

Under the executive order, the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security will be charged with increasing non-immigrant visa processing capacity in China and Brazil by 40 percent in 2012, among other things.

China has become an important tourism market for the CNMI as well.

Saipan Chamber to name its 2011 Businessperson of the Year today

The 2012 Saipan Chamber of Commerce Officers and Directors Installation Dinner will be held today, Jan. 21, 2012, at the Fiesta Hotel and Resort Spa Saipan. Jerry Tan, president of Tan Holdings, will be this year's keynote speaker.

At the Fiesta Hotel's Hibiscus Hall that evening, the Chamber will also name its 2011 Businessperson of the Year honoree. This year, the Chamber has four nominees for the prestigious award: James Arenovski of Delta Management, James Nelson of Docomo Pacific CNMI, Anthony Pellegrino of Saipan Ice and Co., and Michael Johnson of Deloitte.

SCC will continue with its Installation Dinner tradition and hold a silent auction to raise funds for the Scholarship Awards Program.

AND THE NOMINEES ARE...

JAMES T. ARENOVSKI
Delta Management Corp.

Jim T. Arenovski, with his two partners, owns and operates Delta Management Corp., which runs eight Shell service stations. Delta Management also owns Prime Group, Inc., an authorized distributor of pre-paid telecommunications products in the NMI and Guam.

Jim is also the principal of Island Training Solutions, a full service training company that provides OSHA and EEOC compliance, customer service and other staff and management development training programs. He is also managing director for Restaurant 360.

In 2011, Jim founded The Bridge Project, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides entry level job readiness training and works with employers to increase the number of U.S. eligible workers.

Jim has served on the board of NMI Crime Stoppers for 11 years and is currently its chairman. He also sits on the board of Crime Stoppers International.

Jim has been a part of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce since 2000. He has been a director, secretary, president, and vice president.

Jim has lived in the Marianas since 1987. Originally from Yarmouth, Massachusetts, Jim holds a master's degree in Administration from Georgia Southern University. He is active in the local sport community, participating in Xterra, Tagaman, The Hell of the Marianas and various distance swimming events. He is married to Jill M Arenovski. They have two girls.

MICHAEL S. JOHNSON
Deloitte

Michael S. Johnson is the managing partner of Deloitte on Saipan and in Palau and is a longtime resident of Saipan. Mike held the position of Saipan Chamber of Commerce treasurer for three consecutive terms in the early '90s and has been the treasurer of the Chamber since 2005.

Mike came to Saipan in 1982 after earning a master's in Business Administration (emphasis in accounting) and bachelor's degrees at the University of Colorado in Boulder. He is a certified public accountant, a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, a member of the CNMI Society of Certified Public Accountants, and current President of the CNMI Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants. Additionally, Mike was selected by Bishop Tomas Camacho to serve on the financial advisory committee of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa and is a past chairman of the CNMI Board of Accountancy.

Mike is married to Betty Hamilton Johnson. They have three children, Kathleen, Sarah and Andrew. Mike participates in various sports including golf, kayaking, biking, and triathlon. Mike is the current treasurer of the Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation and the Over the Reef Yacht Club.

JAMES E. NELSON
Docomo Pacific – CNMI

James E. Nelson is the general manager of Docomo Pacific – CNMI. He is a former manager of the Windward Hills Golf Course, senior business development executive for the Royal Orchid Guam Hotel, director of Marketing and Sales for Guam-based property firm JMSH LLC. He is also a former general manager of the Guam Visitors Bureau and director of Marketing & Government Affairs for Continental Micronesia, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Continental Airlines, directing the airline's efforts in maintaining favorable relations with the Government of Guam, the CNMI, and the emerging nations of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau.

James has served as president of the Guam Junior Golf League and as a board member for Guam Junior Achievement, Guam Crime Stoppers, Guam Major League, American Red Cross, Guam Chamber of Commerce, and the University of Guam Endowment Foundation.

Internationally, he served as a member of the board of directors of the Pacific Asia Travel Association from 1995 to 2000, and has served as chairman of the PATA Micronesia Chapter from 1996 to 1999. He also served as a member of the PATA Environmental Council.

James studied at Fairfield High School (Calif.), Solano Community College (Calif.), and the University of Guam. He has one daughter, Nicole.

ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Saipan Ice and Water Co., Inc.

Anthony Pellegrino is a businessman on Saipan since 1984 and currently owns and operates Saipan Sea Ventures, Inc., Saipan Ice and Water Co., Inc., Saipan Aquaculture Inc., and the non-profit Northern Marianas Trade Institute. He is also the president and shareholder of Arctic Circle Air and Marianas Meat Processing.

Tony, a public school teacher for 12 years in the United States and Japan, has a bachelor's degree in Education from the Kutztown State Teachers College and a master's in Liberal Arts from the Temple University, Philadelphia.

He is a former president of the Small Business Association in Hawaii, former chairman and director of the CNMI Board of Education, a former Chamber president, and a former Rotary Club member. He was also a businessman in Japan for 16 years and in Hawaii for 10 years.

Among the many projects he has developed and built on Saipan are the Outer Cove Marina and the Horiguchi Building and he was instrumental in having the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library built. As a member of the PSS Board of Education during his term of four years, he was instrumental in building 60 classrooms and five schools. He also started the Advanced Development Institute for high school student dropouts to obtain their diplomas.

Tony is married to Milagros P. Pellegrino and they have five children.

COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT

- **Beachside, Oleai:** Stand alone professional office / house-office or restaurant bar location along Beach Road, 1,800 sq. ft., with good parking, back up generator and beach access. Asking: $1,200/mo.
- **San Jose:** Former SDA Preschool building. Great location. Good condition with fenced yard. Asking: $1,000.00.

HOUSE FOR RENT

- **San Jose House:** 5-bedroom and 2-bathroom house in San Jose. Good location near Dolphin Wholesale and San Jose Mart. Asking: $1,000/mo.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

- **ANAKS Condominium:** 1 unit available. 2-Bedroom, 1 ½-Bathroom. Ocean view. Asking: $1,000/mo.

HOMES FOR SALE

- **Oleai Beach House:** A quiet beachside bungalow. 1 large bedroom and 1 bath home with an unattached 1,800 square foot commercial building on 2,000 square meters of land. Call for details.
- **Sadog-Tasi:** Luxurious executive home, overlooking Managaha Island and Saipan lagoon. 2 storeys with 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms w/ large den & terrace. Beautiful garden & landscape. Call for details.
- **Executive House:** Located in Dan Dan. 5-bedroom, 2-bathroom beautiful 2-storey house; close to Saipan Airport and Dan Dan Elementary School; semi-furnished with 6 split-type A/C, gas stove, etc. Call for details.
- **Dan Dan Homestead:** 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom house. Asking: $28,000.00.
- **Mt. Tapochao House:** Unfinished executive home in good condition. Has 4 large bedrooms, 3 ½ bathrooms and covered terraces. Asking: $135,000.00.

AVAILABLE LAND

- **Vacant land in Tinian:** 25,000 sq. m., more available for farming or development. Close to San Jose. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
- **Vacant land in Capitol Hill:** 4,479 sq. m. available, zoned for residential purposes. Easement not presently open. Asking: $15.00/sq. m.
- **Vacant land in Lower Base:** 25,979 sq. m. available. Asking: $20.00/sq. m.
- **Vacant land on San Rogue Beachfront:** Ideal for a small single house. Asking: $35,000.00.

Alexander

Alexander Realty
Alexander Building, Beach Road San Jose, Saipan MP 96950
For inquiries please contact Alexander Realty at:
234-5117 or e-mail: roy.alexander@saipan.com
Website: www.realtysaipan.com

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-12-006

PIPELINE PROJECT MNAGEMENT, DESIGN SERVICES & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE 8-INCH DIESEL FUEL PIPELINE
(Emergency Procurement)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified and experienced firms to provide Project management to include Design & Construction Management services for CUC's 8-Inch Diesel Fuel Pipeline Replacement Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Contractor shall furnish labor for the Design and Project Management Services for the Commonwealth Utilities Commission (CUC) from award to completion of the 8" diesel pipeline project, tasks shall include but not be limited to weekly, monthly inspection reports, design completion, construction and quality assurance oversight, site visits and coordination with the CUC, construction contractor and regulatory agencies.

The project involves replacement of an existing 8 inch aboveground petroleum pipeline (approx. 1 mile long) with an 8 inch underground pipeline from the Saipan seaport at the Mobil Oil Bulk Plant to the CUC Power Plant 1 and 2. The underground pipe installation portion of the project includes archeological monitoring, excavation/trenching, shoring, placement of bedding, welding and testing of pipe segments, pressure relief valves, high and low point drains, valve pits, pipe jacket, bridge crossing, pipe pigging, cathodic protection, based on 49 CFR part 195 and other applicable codes.

This project is being performed under a stipulated order (SO) being overseen by the U.S. EPA and Federal Judge. The project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI), Office of the Insular Affairs.

The Scope-of-Work will be **e-mailed** upon request, to all interested Offerors, by the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), Monday thru Friday, except government observed holidays.

The response to this RFP must be received with the title **"PIPELINE PROJECT MNAGEMENT, DESIGN SERVICES & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE 8-INCH DIESEL FUEL PIPELINE"** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Purchasing Officer via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Ms. Janina Muna, Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via email mika.muna@cucgov.org no later than **January 27, 2012 at 10:00 AM**, (ChST) local time. Late submissions will not be considered.

All inquiries must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM (CHST) local time on **January 25, 2012** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Purchasing Officer via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org; Technical Manager for Oil via email ed.char@cucgov.org; Managing Engineer, Power generation, via email venugopal.prabhakara@cucgov.org and Ms. Janina Muna, Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via email mika.muna@cucgov.org. CUC will respond to any questions and clarifications only to prospective Offerors who have registered with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division for the solicitation.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. Contract will be awarded to the most responsive proposers, as adjudged by the Source Selection Committee (SSC). CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the Request for Proposal in the interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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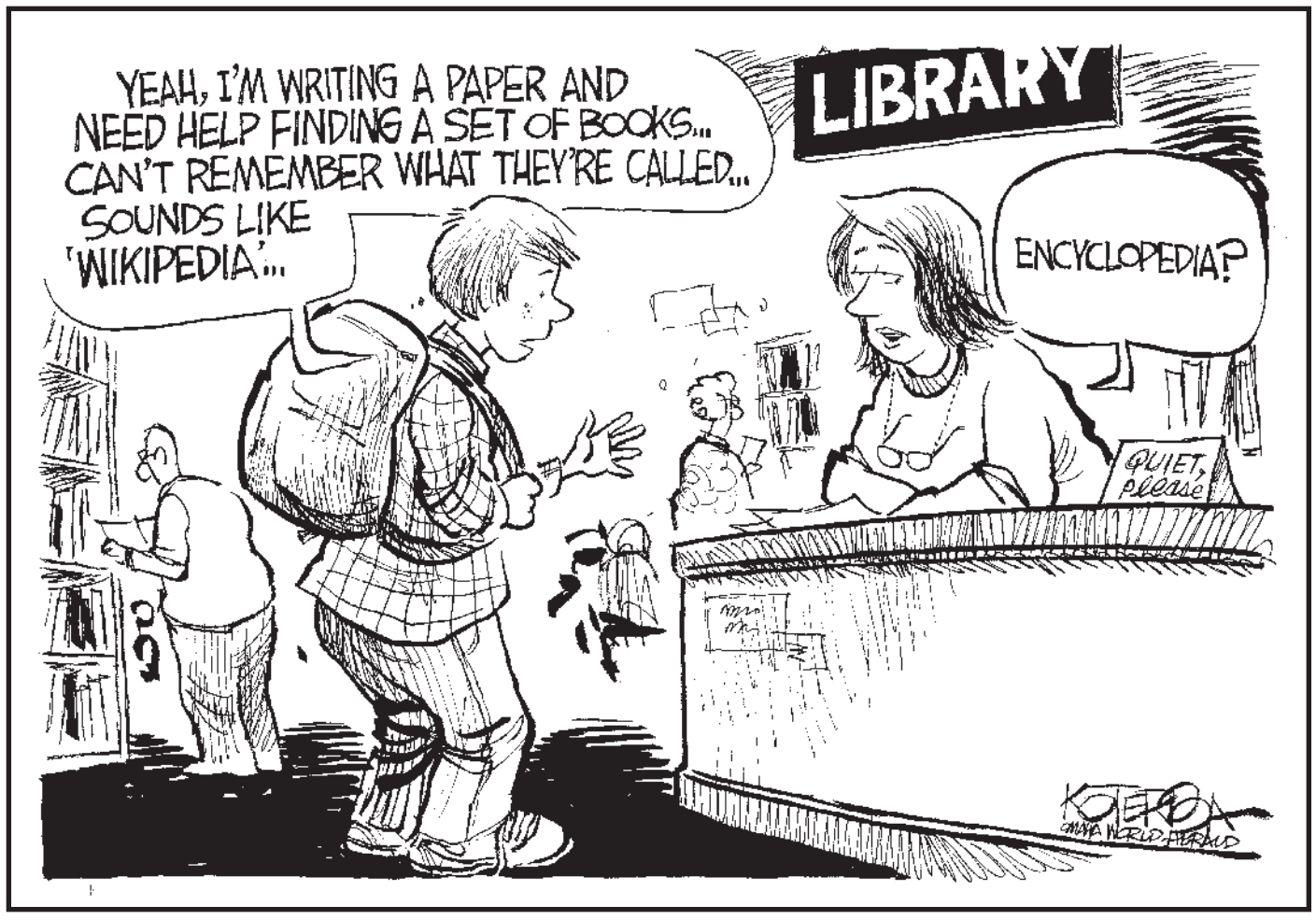

YEAH, I'M WRITING A PAPER AND NEED HELP FINDING A SET OF BOOKS... CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT THEY'RE CALLED... SOUNDS LIKE 'WIKIPEDIA'...
LIBRARY
ENCYCLOPEDIA?
QUIET, please
KOTERBA
OMAHA WORLD-HERALD

Call to OCCUPY

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@gmail.com), former PSS SVES teacher, teaches at Shenyang Aerospace University in Dong Bei, China and was last heard humming the above tune for OCCUPY Honolulu in Oahu January 2012.

Author's Note; Sung to *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony*
(For the Honolulu OCCUPY movement 2012)

Come on People
Live life freely
Learn the way of
Common trust

Listen to the sounds
Alarming
OCCUPY
With other's thrust

Take within yourself
The burden
Green the earth
Many One All

Let blue Gaia
Be your village
Shine your spirit
Walk on tall

Let the light that
Brightens darkness
Innovate
Facilitate

Display care
Up on your shoulder
Do create
Cooperate

Speak your voices
Even in shadows
Open the eyes of
Those you love

Never let the
Doubts beclouding
Block the sunshine
From above

Heed the cries
Align your passion
Join the struggle
Of our time

Swing your hip
And dance the *Hula*
Grace the change
Of paradigm

Launch with those
Who share the vision
Fructify
Humanity

In a life that
Keeps on burning
Live *Ohana's*
Reality

Show *Aloha*
That's your calling
Dramatize
The signs divine

Each one on the
Globe your brother
And your sister
Life's combine

Choose to follow
Lead the journey
Know that alone
You dance the Way

Then join hands
Commune together
OCCUPY
Be here to stay

GOP field makes sorry showing on foreign policy

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer, *P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

When it comes to foreign policy, the current Republican candidates are so incoherent they make George W. Bush look like a savant.

I know that what candidates say on foreign affairs on the stump is often abandoned once in office. Yet it certainly looks as if the old guard of Republican foreign-policy experts is obsolete in the age of angry tea party populism. At a time when diplomatic savvy is desperately needed, outrageous remarks get the most cheers from the base.

The comments on international affairs at Republican debates are often so clueless they've become grist for satire in foreign capitals. Believe me, they aren't helping efforts to assert U.S. leadership abroad.

Take Monday's debate in South Carolina. One might have hoped the absence of Herman "Ubeki-beki-beki-stan-stan" Cain and Michele Bachmann would have elevated the discussion.

But along came Texas Gov. Rick Perry (who has confused India and Pakistan in the past) with his claim that NATO ally Turkey is run by "Islamic terrorists." Perry went on to lump Turkey with Syria and Iran.

"Not only is it time for us to have a conversation about whether or not they belong to be in NATO," Perry stated, "but it's time for the United States, when we look at their foreign aid, to go zero with it."

Perry has it exactly backward. Turkey's elected leaders, who come from a party with Islamic roots, are prickly and some of their policies are questionable, including a crackdown on domestic critics. But this Turkish government is the key offset to Iranian influence in the region.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has taken a strong stand against the Assad regime's slaughter in Syria, and helped stabilize Iraq; he has permitted NATO early warning radars to be based on Turkish soil. Erdogan even lectured Egypt's victorious Islamist parties on the virtues of a secular state.

As for U.S. "foreign aid" to prospering Turkey, that amounted to only $5.4 million in 2011, most of it for security programs in which the United States has a shared interest. Perhaps Perry confused Turkey with Pakistan (which does get substantial U.S. aid).

One could laugh off the Texan's gaffes were it not that, amazingly, he's still in the running. His remarks got huge play inside Turkey, and prompted a strong Turkish government rebuttal.

Then we come to Newt Gingrich, whose campaign is running an anti-Romney ad that charges: "Just like (Massachusetts Democratic Sen.) John Kerry, he speaks French." Quelle horreur! That "crime" may resonate with Republican primary voters who think speaking a foreign tongue is elitist (maybe that's why the Mandarin-speaking Jon Huntsman had to quit the Republican race).

But the ad also provides rich fodder for bloggers and comics, many of whom point out that Gingrich lived in France from age 14 to 16 and lists Charles de Gaulle among his heroes. Wags have noted that if Gingrich doesn't know French, he couldn't have read many of the books in the bibliography of his Ph.D. thesis about Belgian colonialism.

Gingrich's most notable foreign-policy line in this week's debate, which drew huge cheers, was: "Andrew Jackson had a pretty clear-cut idea about America's enemies: Kill them." He was referring to Osama bin Laden—which is fine with me—but that tone infuses his broad approach to international relations. Bang, bang.

Example: In a November debate, he claimed the administration could get rid of the Syrian regime "very rapidly" with "much more aggressive policies." Clearly, Gingrich has minimal understanding of the Middle East.

I don't have space to list Rick Santorum's foreign-policy gaffes, but I will if his candidacy lasts. As for Ron Paul, despite my disagreement with his isolationism, he at least makes a coherent argument for his ideas.

Which brings me to the front-runner, Mitt Romney. I'd thought by now that Romney would have upgraded his foreign-policy presentation. No such luck.

Never mind that he, like Gingrich, insists on running against those effete Europeans, accusing President Obama of seeking to "turn America into a European-style entitlement society." You would think that Romney—who has lived in Europe—would know that Germany, unlike the United States, has managed to maintain its manufacturing jobs and an excellent health-care system, while keeping its economy strong.

More disturbing is Romney's posturing about defense spending and our military operations overseas. In these austere times, Romney calls for adding 100,000 U.S. troops and vastly expanding defense outlays, while further cutting taxes. Excuse me?

In this week's debate, when asked whether the United States should talk to the Taliban, he responded: "Of course not. Speaker Gingrich is right. They've killed Americans. We go anywhere they are, and we kill them."

I've expressed my doubts about whether talks with the Taliban will work, but there's no question we have to try them. As our generals have repeatedly stated, no military victory can be achieved in Afghanistan. Some kind of political solution is needed.

When the Fox News questioner pointed out that Romney adviser Mitchell Reiss had proposed talks with the Taliban, the candidate ignored the question and insisted, "We should defeat the Taliban." Perhaps Romney needs to spend more time with his advisers. Judging from his performance so far, he's not ready for foreign-policy prime time.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Why do feminists ignore gendercide?

By JENNIFER A. MARSHALL and SARAH TORRE
THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

You'd notice if 160 million women were missing from the U.S. population.

You couldn't help but notice, actually. There aren't that many females in the whole country.

Yet that's how many girls have been lost in Asia to the practice of sex-selective abortion. The crisis is the subject of Mara Hvistendahl's provocative new book, *Unnatural Selection: Choosing Boys Over Girls and the Consequences of a World Full of Men.*

"Gendercide," as it's been called, should worry women. Even in America.

Feminists told us abortion would empower women. Instead, in some places around the globe, abortion disproportionately is used against women. A tsunami of social problems is swelling as a result.

The natural ratio of males to females at birth is 105 to 100. Stats that deviate mean something unnatural is at work—and what's happening in places like China and India today is anything but natural.

In China, abortion is often a means of compliance with the government's policy of one child per family. Combined with a Chinese cultural preference for boys to carry on a family line, sex-selective abortion has become particularly prevalent.

The result is a ratio of boys to girls that tops 120 to 100, with some provinces of China reporting an unprecedented ratio of 130 to 100.

In India, 112 boys are now born for every 100 girls.

In recent decades, demographers estimate, the continent of Asia has lost approximately 163 million women to sex-selective abortion. By comparison, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has claimed 25 million lives.

Globally, the ratio by sex already has increased to 107 males for every 100 females because of the sheer scale of the abortion of female babies. Even if the birth ratio normalized immediately, the natural balance would not be restored until 2050.

In addition to the harm for women, gender imbalance prevents men from entering the socially stabilizing institution of marriage. An article in *The Economist* magazine notes that a rising demand for brides in female-starved communities increasingly is met through coercion and trafficking.

Sex-selective abortion is at work in the United States as well. Until recent negative publicity, "it was not unusual to find abortionists advertising the availability of sex-selective abortions in newspapers," Steven W. Mosher, president of the Population Research Institute, testified at a congressional hearing in December.

In a 2008 study, Columbia University researchers found that among children born in America to Chinese, Korean, and Indian parents, a first-born girl tends to skew the sex ratio of the second or third birth. For second births the male-female ratio was 117 to 100, the report said, and for third births 151 to 100 if the couple already had two girls.

As technology plays a larger role in reproduction, parents can choose whether to carry a child to term based on sex or other genetic characteristics. That leads to Hvistendahl's grim conclusion: "In China and California alike, mothers have become their own eugenicists."

But feminist groups such as the National Organization for Women and NARAL Pro-Choice America have yet to join the call to outlaw sex-selective abortion. Rather than show solidarity with their daughters and sisters in life, they swear allegiance to unrestricted access to abortion—even when it decimates females.

The irony is extremely bitter: "In a world in which women are unnaturally scarce," the pro-choice Hvistendahl writes, "the right to abort will be the least of our worries."

Despite the author's candor, most pro-choice advocates ignore abortion's role in decreasing the number of women and instead blame gender bias.

"Son preference is a symptom of deeply rooted social biases and stereotypes about gender," a representative of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum said in congressional testimony. "Gender inequity cannot be solved by banning abortion."

Jonathan V. Last, who writes about cultural and political issues, begs to differ. The choice is clear, he argued last summer in the *Wall Street Journal*.

"Restrict abortion," Last wrote, "or accept the slaughter of millions of baby girls and the calamities that are likely to come with it."

If there is equality between women and men, it's rooted in our nature and purpose as human beings. Denying that fundamental dignity inherent in all human life destroys the very basis of equality.

After that, on what basis can feminists advance gender equity? They can't have it both ways.

Jennifer A. Marshall is director of the DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation, where Sarah Torre is a research assistant.

Two versions of Obama's record

By CARL P. LEUBSDORF
The Dallas Morning News

Carl P. Leubsdorf is the former Washington bureau chief of the Dallas Morning News. *Readers may write to him via email at: carl.p.leubsdorf@gmail.com.*

When they're not attacking one another, Republican presidential candidates are making what appears on the surface to be a strong case for denying President Barack Obama a second term.

However, Obama's backers can counter most GOP points and make some of their own, while recognizing the handicap of an uncomfortably high unemployment rate and public pessimism about the country's direction.

As the president enters his fourth year and prepares to lay out his 2012 agenda in next week's State of the Union address, here are some of the arguments his foes and supporters are making:

Obama has failed to cure the economic mess he inherited. Critics repeatedly cite his administration's overly optimistic prediction that its stimulus program would hold unemployment to 8 percent, a figure not yet achieved. But the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said that, without the Obama program, unemployment would have been much higher. And the administration cites steady improvement. Private-sector employment has increased more than 3 million in the past two years, after dropping 4.2 million in 2009.

He has failed to unite the country and is creating class warfare. Obama oversold his ability to end partisan discord in Washington and bears considerable responsibility for failing to reach out to top Republicans. But the GOP also deserves blame for resisting his initiatives from the start, especially Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell for proclaiming in 2010 that his main goal was to deny Obama a second term. The class warfare charge stems from Obama's effort to reduce the nation's growing income inequality.

He is trying to transform the U.S. into "a European-style social welfare state," as GOP presidential contender Mitt Romney put it. Other GOP hopefuls use similar language, suggesting a concerted campaign to paint the nation's first African-American president as not quite American. His opposition to a single-payer health care system shows that Obama is a liberal Democrat, not a socialist.

Obama's re-election won't end partisan gridlock, but election of a Republican president and Senate might lead to needed changes. Both are probably true to some degree. An Obama second term would be tough if Republicans keep opposing everything he proposes. But even if the GOP achieves its electoral goals, efforts to repeal the health care and Dodd-Frank financial regulation laws could tie lawmakers up in partisan knots, and a Republican program giving more tax cuts to wealthy Americans will meet fierce Democratic resistance.

Obama's foreign policy has been weak and failed to halt Iran's nuclear development. A favorite GOP target has been the phrase, attributed to an unnamed adviser in a New Yorker article, that Obama was "leading from behind" in dealing with the revolution in Libya. But Obama has pushed ever stronger sanctions against Iran, and working with European leaders behind the scenes helped oust Moammar Gadhafi and facilitate change in Egypt.

Moreover, Obama has achieved significant success overseas.

His administration's more targeted effort has reduced al-Qaida's effectiveness by killing many top leaders, notably Osama bin Laden. Obama ended the Iraq war and launched U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan while seeking to strengthen government forces.

Finally, Obama kept many 2008 promises: His aggressive effort rescued the economy from collapse; he passed the nation's first comprehensive health care measure and greater regulation of financial markets; and he moderated the tone of U.S. foreign policy.

Other initiatives failed, including a cap and trade program to cope with climate change and closing the Guantánamo prison for suspected terrorists.

Like many presidents facing re-election, Obama's record is mixed. But that's not unusual.

Ronald Reagan underwent a deep recession before the economy strengthened in 1984, Bill Clinton suffered significant first-term failures but spurred economic growth and passed a long-awaited welfare reform bill, while George W. Bush rode the public's post-9/11 support of his war on terror to a narrow triumph.

In the end, voters will decide whose version of Obama's record to accept.

Fancy labels are rarely worth what we pay

By DANIEL AKST
Newsday

Daniel Akst, a columnist for Newsday, *is the author of* We Have Met the Enemy: Self-Control in an Age of Excess *from Penguin Press.*

Here is an experiment you are guaranteed to love. Researchers asked top-notch violinists at an international competition to play some instruments and judge their quality. But the violinists' vision was obscured, so they couldn't see which violin was a 300-year-old Stradivarius worth millions and which were just good contemporary instruments.

Thrillingly, the experts thought they could tell them apart by playing but really had no idea. In fact, the Strad was their least preferred instrument. These results are consistent with findings about wine. In blind tastings, experts and consumers alike are for the most part unable to distinguish expensive wines from cheap ones. Wine specialists, moreover, have repeatedly shown that their judgments are susceptible to what they've been told about a wine's price.

I love these studies, don't you? They make the experts look like bozos, after all, and they make me feel better about being a cheapskate. There's nothing more uplifting than the sight of a naked emperor revealed in all his foolish glory.

But let's not get carried away. A musician I know has a viola appraised a few years back at $40,000, and another valued at $400,000. When she played them both for me to see if I could appreciate the difference, I was skeptical, but it turned out that I could. The costlier, older instrument had a richer sound. But the difference wasn't huge, and the cost of this relatively modest improvement (to my tin ear) was staggering.

My friend is a world-class musician who can justify the expense. Besides, scarce old instruments—hers is from 1680—have been good investments over the past 30 years, so ultimately she'll probably come out ahead.

Yet I can't stop focusing on what a small gain was purchased at 10 times the expense. Too often we allow ourselves to be tyrannized by what Freud called "the narcissism of small differences," which either don't exist or aren't large enough to justify their great cost. This applies to much of what we buy.

We might be happier not obsessing as much over which is the very best pair of earbuds or which luxury car has a few more horsepower. In fact, hunting restlessly for the very best of anything, including the absolutely optimal cup of coffee, violin or even spouse, is usually a terrible idea. This behavior is known in the social sciences as "maximizing," and researchers have shown that it's a great way to make yourself miserable. Much better to find something that's quite good enough and call it a day.

It's also much cheaper. Leaving aside the cost of searching, most things are subject to the 80-20 rule, which states roughly that 20 percent of inputs account for 80 percent of outputs. In other words, beyond a certain point, a relatively small improvement in anything will cost you way too much.

You can make a lot of hay by embracing this rule, which comes to us from an economist named Vilfredo Pareto. In business, for example, you'd eliminate product lines that produce only 20 percent of profits yet consume 80 percent of your effort. And you'd shoo away customers who take up 80 percent of your time in exchange for just 20 percent of sales.

I find the 80-20 rule quite comforting, in that it suggests there's no need for great wealth, just as I find the recent violin study quite comforting, for it implies that violinists needn't worry if they can't afford a Stradivarius.

My friend, incidentally, is skeptical of the study, arguing that a violin may sound one way to a player "under the ear," but quite another to the audience in a concert hall. Maybe. But the more important question is whether the difference even matters.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Light and variable winds. Highs around 85.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Light and variable winds. Highs around 85.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

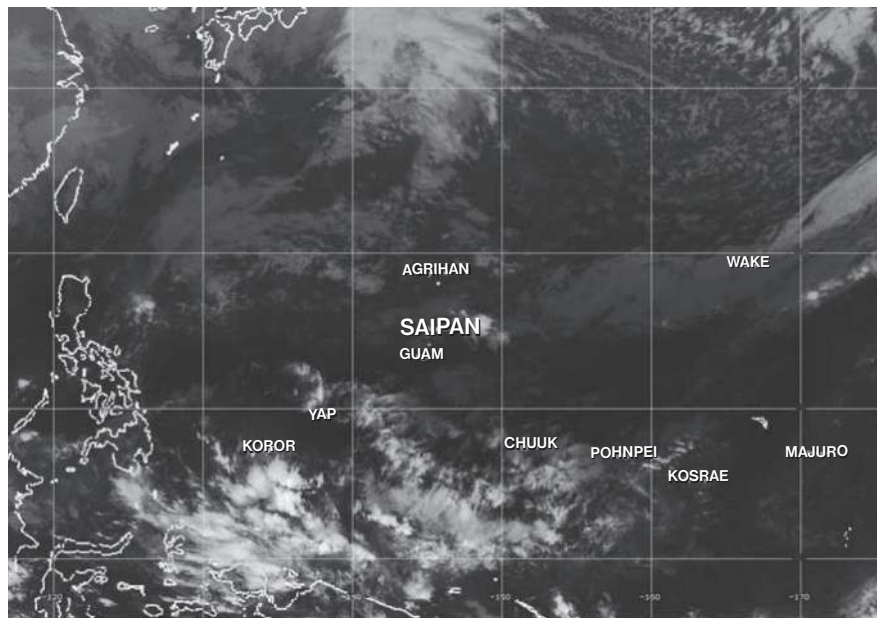
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲82	▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼78
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼78
Chuuk	Showers	▲86	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼80
Kosrae	Showers	▲85	▼80
Majuro	Showers	▲85	▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲69	▼61
Beijing	Sunny	▲30	▼ 6
Hong Kong	Showers	▲61	▼50
Honolulu	Sunny	▲81	▼71
London	Windy	▲54	▼43
Los Angeles	Rain	▲62	▼46
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼73
Melbourne	Sunny	▲89	▼61
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼65
New York	Ice	▲34	▼25
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲49	▼41
Paris	Showers	▲53	▼43
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲41	▼24
Rome	Sunny	▲61	▼41
Salem	Rain	▲45	▼40
San Francisco	Showers	▲57	▼44
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲24	▼13
Tokyo	Showers	▲47	▼39
Washington, DC	Showers	▲42	▼34

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from southwest of Midway Island at 20N180 to southeast of Wake Island at 17N170E then continues westward as a shear line to near Saipan at 15N146E to beyond 130E at 15N east of 153E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 350 miles northwest of this boundary west of 153E cloudiness and widely scattered showers are present along and up to 200 miles north of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough heads east-southeastward from 3N130E through a weak circulation centered south of Koror at 3N135E to end at EQ152E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring just south of Koror and also south of Yap and Chuuk or south of a line from 8N130E to 2N153E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:00 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
7:15 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
12:16 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
5:16 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:35 AM	4:10 PM
Sunday	5:30 AM	5:10 PM
Monday	6:21 AM	6:08 PM
Tuesday	7:08 AM	7:03 PM
Wednesday	7:51 AM	7:56 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

SCHEDULE OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am Chamorro, 9am English, 11am Filipino and 6pm English
Monday-Saturday: 6am Chamorro
Wednesday: 6pm Chamorro
Parish office hours:
Monday-Saturday
8am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-5pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm (PH Novena 5:45pm)
Friday: 5:30pm praying of Divine Mercy Chaplet; 6pm devotional mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
Saturday: 6am and 6pm (anticipated)
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am 6pm Tagalog mass
Parish office hours: (Fr. Celso G. Magbanua) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 8-11:30am/ 3-5:30pm, Wednesday and Friday 3-5pm.
Telephone no. 285-0273

Santa Soledad Mission Parish
Monday: 6pm
Tuesday: 6pm
Wednesday: 6pm
Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm (Youth mass/ anticipated Sunday mass)
Sunday: 7am and 9am (Children's mass)
Parish office hours: Wednesday and Friday: 8-10am,
Saturday: 4-6pm
Telephone no. 256-4568

Saint Jude Parish
Monday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 7am
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Parish office hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-11:30am, 3:30-5pm
Office is close every Thursday and Saturday
Telephone no. 288-0007

San Antonio Parish
Monday-Friday 6pm
Saturday: 6pm
Sunday: 7am, 9am (Blessing of children)
Parish office hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 8-11:30am, 2-4:45pm
Close on Sunday and Monday

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am Chamorro, 8am English
Monday and Tuesday:6am Chamorro
Wednesday:6pm English
Thursday: 6am Chamorro
Friday: 6am English
Saturday: 6am Chamorro, 6pm Tagalog
Sunday: anticipated mass

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am, 8am, 10am
Monday-Friday: 7pm
Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Monday- Saturday: 6am daily mass
Monday- Sunday: 3pm Divine Mercy Chaplet
Wednesday: 6pm, mass, exposition of the blessed sacrament
Saturday: 6pm, anticipated Sunday mass
Sunday: 7:30-9am English, 6pm Tagalog mass
Office hours: Monday-Wednesday: 9am-12pm, 2-5pm
Thursday: day off
Friday- Saturday: 8am-12pm, 2-5pm
Telephone no. 234-6991

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 7:30am Chamorro, 9am English
Monday: 6pm English
Tuesday: 6pm English
Wednesday: 6pm English- novena mass to our Lady of San Roque oil
Thursday: 6pm English
Friday: 6pm English- Devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus (First Fridays)
Saturday: 6am English- Our Lady's Saturday mass for the intentions of the Men and Women in military service, 6pm English- anticipated mass
Parish office hours: daily except Thursday and Sundays: 4:30-6pm
Telephone no. 322-2404, Fr. Bong's cell: 285-912, Diocesan Finance office: 234-3000 ext.143

San Vicente Parish
Monday-Friday: 6pm,
Saturday: 6pm (First Saturday of every month)
Sunday: 6am anticipated mass, 6pm (Neo Catechumenal community mass), 8pm
Sunday: 6am, 9am, 6pm
Parish office hours: daily 9-11am
Telephone no. 235-8208 or 287-0131

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 8am
Monday: 6pm (1st Mondays cemetery masses at 5:30pm)
Tuesday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm-anticipated Sunday mass 8-10pm
Parish office hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30am-12pm

PROTESTANT

Amen Church
Sunday : 10am, 1pm, 5pm Wednesday : 7pm Friday Prayer : 9pm Bible Study : 4pm (Tue) Music Practice : 5pm (Sat) Korean class: 3:30pm (Thu) Visitation : 10am(Fri, Sat) Outreach : 8am (First Sat)
Tel. No. 285-2121, 256-2221 Email : oseyo@daum.net

Born Again Christian
(Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm
Telephone no. 234-6026/27

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services:
Sunday: Chinese and Filipino 9am, English 6pm
Bible Study: Wednesday and Saturday 8pm
Telephone no. 235-8540

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Morning Service, Sunday, 10:00 am
Evening Service, Sunday, 6:00 pm
Children Sunday School, 10:00am/ 6:00 pm
Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7-9 pm
Youth Night of Worship, Friday, 6:30 pm
As Perdido Road
Chalan Piao, Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No. (670) 235-8590
Email: cornerstone@cfemcares.org

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Garapan, Plumeria Road,
Call 285-6081 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 9-11am
Sunday school/ Children's church 9am (nursery available during Sunday service)
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: 6am Tuesday GCA Kagman, Wednesday Navy Hill, Thursday San Antonio
Home Cell Bible Study: 7pm (Through out the week)
Telephone no. 322-5680

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (English)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (Tagalog)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church
Chalan Kanoa Drive, Chalan Kanoa
(east of Town Center and Beach Road, Near Mt. Carmel Cathedral)
Worship Service: 9:00am
Children's Sunday School: 9:00am
Choir Practice: 8:00am
Singspiration: 8:30am
Prayer, Care & Share: Wednesday 7:00pm
Pastor: Millie Carroll 322-6158

Immanuel Methodist Church
(Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)
(Korean Congregation)
Sunday worship: 9am, 10:30, 1pm
Wednesday evening service: 8pm
Daily morning prayer: 5am

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
Sunday English Service: 7:30-9am,
Sunday Tagalog Service: 9-11am and 6-8pm,
Wednesday: 7:30-9pm

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9:20am
Sunday Adult: 11am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service: 10 am at Seventh Day Adventist church on Quartermaster Rd.
Wednesday Service: 7 pm at Fina Sisu Housing FS#1
Contact Nick for more info: 287-1661

Marianas Bible Fellowship Center
Sunday School: 9-9:30am
Divine Worship: 9:30-11am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ (4th Watch)
Sunday worship 8:30am
Sunday evening 7:00pm
Prayer meeting, every Wednesday 7:30pm
San Jose village, after San Jose Hotel
Telephone: 789-7566

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 10-11am
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 6-7pm
Thursday Bible Study: 7pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church Koblerville
Sunday services:
Sunday school 9:00am
Morning worship 10:00am
Evening service 6:00pm
Wednesday evening bible study 7:00pm

Chinese services
Sunday morning 10:00am
Sunday evening 7:00pm

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church.
Telephone No: 285-4661/2

Thy Word Ministries Saipan
Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service
located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi

Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian
Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Victorious Christian Church
(Formerly God's Victorious Army)
Sunday 8:30am to 10:30am - Worship Service
Monday 7:00 pm - Women's Fellowship
Tuesday nights - Home cellgroup
Wednesday - 7:30pm to 9:00pm Mid Week Service
Friday 7:30pm to 9:00pm Prayer Meeting
Saturday nights - Praise and worship practice
Last Friday of the month - Overnight praying meeting
Pastor Brendon Perez - Tel# 2359246

Editor's Note: Information subject to change without prior notice. All information provided by the respective churches. If you want your church or religious activities included or to report changes and errors, call *Saipan Tribune* at 235-6397 or 235-2440 or email editor@saipantribune.com.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 21, 1999

CPA board OKs budget supplement
The Commonwealth Ports Authority board has approved a supplemental budget amounting to $66,264 to carry out capital improvement projects on Saipan, Rota and Tinian. Of this, some $42,264 will go to the airport while $24,000 will go to the seaport. This include additional funding for the expansion of West Tinian Airport amounting to $33,822. The ports authority had earlier approved a total of $11.10 million budget for fiscal year 1999. This include an appropriation of some $9.73 million for the airport operation, an 11 percent decline over the previous year. At least 58 percent of the airport budget goes to salaries and wages of personnel.

Office sought to manage parks
A bill pending at the House of Representatives will seek the creation of a government office to oversee public parks on the island and impose fees on the use of the sites for repair and maintenance of facilities. The proposed office will still be part of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources which, under the existing law, is the lead agency supervising various parks in the CNMI. The Division of Parks and Recreation will be provided authority to undertake landscaping, beautification of these parks, while assess fees to generate its own revenues, according to the measure proposed by Rep. Oscar Babauta.

Jan. 21, 2000

MVA seeks $8 million budget for 2001
The Marianas Visitors Authority is seeking an $8 million budget for fiscal year 2001, a $2.2. million increase from this year's budget. MVA board chair David M. Sablan has expressed hope that the proposed budget will be approved by the Legislature without cuts so that they can effectively market the CNMI as an ideal destination in the Pacific. He warned that continuous budget cuts may affect current efforts to revive the ailing tourism economy. MVA has been planning to tap its alternative markets —Hong Kong and Taiwan but the money for promotion is not even enough to pursue Japan and Korea, its main source of visitors.

UOG inks pact with NMC to offer business courses
The University of Guam has agreed to offer its business administration courses on Saipan through the facility of the Northern Marianas College. Since last week, NMC began offering Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with accounting major, according to continuing education Dean Edward Camacho. The college has also started extending courses on managerial communications, management of organization, basic business finance and applied statistics. The agreement was reached following over six months of negotiations between officials of the University of Guam and the Northern Marianas College.

Jan. 21, 2002

'Road works better left to mayors'
In an expression of support for the administration of Saipan Mayor Juan Borja Tudela, House Rep. William S. Torres said the local government should be empowered to take full responsibility over the repair of secondary roads, which it currently shares with the Department of Public Works. Torres said this in an interview at the Hyatt Regency Saipan, where he attended Tudela's inaugural ball Saturday night. "We would like the mayor to assume responsibility for the repair of secondary roads," Torres said. "At the present time, this responsibility is divided into the mayor and the [Department of] Public Works. We would like the mayor to assume the entire responsibility."

Chamber cuts fees to attract more members
In the face of the continued economic downturn, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce is taking a bolder move in an effort to increase its membership and satisfy current members: A 30- to 50-percent cut in annual dues to take effect immediately. The Saipan Chamber of Commerce has over 140 members, making it the largest private business organization in the CNMI. The chamber offers various types of benefits that companies will be able to obtain for being a member, said Chamber Executive Director Carlene Reyes-Tenorio. She said a central benefit of Chamber membership "is the voice that dues buy, a voice that is dedicated to overcoming impediments to the conduct of commerce in the Northern Marianas." The organization provides collective representation with the CNMI government via the Chamber's government relations program, said Reyes-Tenorio.

Maharlika

Labor attaché reflects on challenges as she nears end of tour

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

"Challenging yet fulfilling" is how outgoing labor attaché Carmelina F. Velasquez describes her two-year tour of duty in the CNMI, her second overseas assignment.

Velasquez, who arrived on Jan. 26, 2010, looks forward to being with her family when she flies back to the Philippines on Wednesday and resume her post as the Funds and Investment Management Office director for the head office of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

Velasquez

As labor attaché designate, Velasquez said her main responsibility was to promote the welfare and protect the interest of Filipino workers in the Commonwealth.

Velasquez has under her belt other overseas assignments and missions, including a stint as a labor attaché in Brunei, but she considers the situation in the CNMI "unique" and "different" as it was fraught with the difficulties brought by the federalization law and the ongoing transition period of most employers on the islands.

"It's challenging because I came at a difficult time—everything is in limbo," explained Velasquez. "I knew very well since day one that it would really be difficult because of the unique situation of the islands. On the other hand, it's fulfilling because you are able to serve Filipino workers."

Compounding Velasquez's tasks, she said, is their job generation thrust. "That proved to be even more difficult given how hard it is to tap the labor market here and find employment for our *kababayans*."

The key challenge, Velasquez said, was how to deliver the services and programs of their office in the wake of federalization and the release of the final rule for all transitional foreign workers, including Filipinos.

"My answer to that is the reintegration program," she told *Saipan Tribune*. "Because of the uncertainties, our reintegration program served as a safety net for all Filipino workers."

Velasquez takes pride in having thousands of Filipinos in the Commonwealth benefit from the reintegration program. According to her, the number of enrollees and graduates under the program has increased three-fold. "The increase in numbers is a gauge, a clear manifestation of the success of the program."

Velasquez said they provided additional courses like Basic Mandarin, financial literacy, and business management seminars that educated Filipino workers on financial discipline and encouraged them to become entrepreneurs, on top of the usual classes offered such as Basic Computer Operations.

"I think our program has been successful because we saw right away that they were able to apply the new skills they learned, like those who learned how to use the computer and send email to their loved ones or even communicate using another language," she said.

What remains to be done is for the graduates to translate their skills into actual businesses in the Philippines, Velasquez said, one that would help create employment prospects for other Filipinos.

"We all know there's a lot of business opportunities now in the Philippines because our economy is improving. This is the right time for Filipinos in the CNMI to start their own business and take advantage of the available loan program. I am hopeful that they will be able to do that in time," she said.

Velasquez pointed out that the success of the reintegration program would not have been possible without the support of the Filipino community and their "social partners"—course instructors.

"The Filipino community here is very supportive. They made my life easier and they're there to support you all the way," she said.

During her term, Velasquez disclosed that they were also able to resolve labor and welfare cases through counseling and referrals with the assistance and cooperation of federal and local authorities.

As the end of her tour of duty draws near, Velasquez reflected on what she likes most about Saipan. "Saipan is a quiet and relatively safe place unlike the city. The lifestyle here is so simple and everybody knows everybody. The close ties of people is unmistakable,"

But more than the place, Velasquez said it's the people who have been dear to her heart and the friendships she has established that she will profoundly miss.

"Thank you to all those I worked for and all that I worked with. I will be forever grateful to all those who made my stay easier, meaningful, memorable. I wouldn't trade them for the world," she said.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Labor representative Carmelina F. Velasquez, welfare officer Julie Fabian, and Consul Belinda Ante pose with course instructors for the reintegration program after a meeting held at the Filipino Workers Resource Center on Jan. 14.

Consulate's Oca bids goodbye

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

For Remily Oca, her two-year assignment on Saipan gave her the opportunity to be up close and personal with many Filipino workers in the Commonwealth, giving her first-hand knowledge and a deeper appreciation of some of the country's *bagong bayani* or new heroes.

A native of South Cotabato, Oca arrived on island on Jan. 21, 2010, tasked with the responsibility of performing administrative functions, including the issuance of overseas employment certificate or OEC and providing assistance in labor cases.

Oca

"This was my first overseas assignment and it has made me a well-rounded individual and a better public servant. The knowledge I gained here will also help me come up with programs for Filipino workers," said Oca in an interview a few days before her Jan. 19 flight back to the Philippines.

Fondly known as Remy in the Filipino community, Oca said she helped Filipino workers—"to the best of my ability and under the supervision of labor attaché Carmelina Velasquez"—by easing the confusions caused by the federalization of the CNMI's immigration system.

"We tried to help them understand every latest development about federalization and, at the same time, conduct the reintegration program to prepare those who are willing to go back home and start their own businesses," she said.

Oca's temporary assignment on island was part of the job enhancement efforts of their office, the Department of Labor Region 12 office in Koronadal City, where she provided support services at their technical division and field office.

"I feel fortunate to have been assigned here because I had the chance to do front line service, unlike in South Cotabato where I stayed behind the scenes. I was able to interact and have conversations with Filipino workers here," she said.

Besides work, Oca also became occupied with activities that helped her cope during her first few months on island. "Taking long walks by the beach or having a simple chat with friends helped in those times I was lonely."

Living on Saipan, Oca said, had been easy for her due to the large Filipino population that made her feel like she was still in the Philippines.

"I find it very impressive the simplicity of life on Saipan," she told *Saipan Tribune*. "The disparity between the rich and the poor is not evident and people are generally pleasant and hospitable. There's no heavy traffic, no pollution, and it's rich in natural resources. You can go to a nice, clean beach anytime and for free."

This mother of four has "mixed feelings" about leaving Saipan. "I'm happy that I'm going to be with my family once again but I also feel sad knowing that I will be saying goodbye to the friends I've made at work, in the Filipino community, at church, my neighbors. In my two years here, I was able to develop strong bonds of friendship with them. It's very difficult to bid farewell to these people because they already hold a place in my heart," she said.

Oca expressed appreciation for the help and support that she received from everyone in the community.

"I thank God for the opportunity to be here, of all places. I feel lucky to have stayed here and I'll surely get in touch with all the friends I've made on Saipan," she added.

POLO's training instructors given their due

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Philippine Overseas Labor Office and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration expressed its appreciation to all training instructors for its reintegration program for Filipino workers in the CNMI.

Labor attaché Carmelina F. Velasquez and welfare officer Julie Fabian gathered the instructors in a meeting at the Filipino Workers Resource Center last Saturday.

"We owe it all to you. We won't be able to accomplish what we have without your involvement and contributions," Velasquez told some 14 instructors.

During the meeting, Velasquez also urged the instructors to continue inspiring Filipinos in the Commonwealth through the courses that they teach and to let their *kababayans* know that something can happen out of their classes.

Velasquez underscored the need for "success stories" or for reintegration program graduates to translate their acquired skills into an actual business in the Philippines.

"We are here to help Filipino workers to achieve that," said Velasquez as she reiterated the OFW Reintegration Loan Program of the Aquino administration, which aims to provide Filipino workers with loans to start their own businesses.

"This is our time to give back," Velasquez said. "Saipan has been very supportive through their help in the *Tuloy Aral* program that it's time for us to help you."

Velasquez, who will conclude her two-year tour of duty next week, assured continuity in the reintegration program and coordination with instructors through Fabian.

The instructors welcomed the assurance and also made suggestions to improve the program such as conducting a retreat for instructors and extending the length of the business management course to better educate as well as motivate Filipino workers to become entrepreneurs.

Jhun Bañadera, who teaches business management, said in an interview that the Consulate and POLO's plan to "level up" instruction and focus it on establishing businesses is timely.

"We're not getting any younger. The way I see it, if you want to improve your life, the only way to do it is to have your own successful business," the accountant at Saipan Shipping told *Saipan Tribune.*

Zaldy Quebral, for his part, said the reintegration program is a great program that should be maintained to help Filipino workers acquire skills that they can use to better their lives.

"Even with Ms. Velasquez gone, I know Ms. Julie will carry on with the program and she can rely on my full support," added Quebral.

Cooking competition to feature 5 authentic Pinoy dishes

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

United Filipino Organization, the umbrella organization of some 30 groups, has identified five traditional *Pinoy* dishes that contestants will cook during the cooking competition at its first ever *Pusong Pinoy* Valentine event next month.

UFO secretary and program committee co-chair Annamae Adaza said yesterday that contestants would have to prepare authentic pork *adobo, beef caldereta, tinolang manok, ginataang* tuna, and *pinakbet* for their entries in the competition.

Adaza said the competition is open only to restaurants and caterers with valid business licenses and permits.

Entries will be judged based on taste (50 percent), texture (20 percent), presentation (20 percent), and audience participation (10 percent) since the entries will also be sampled by the audience at the event.

The first place winner will get $300; second place, $200; and third place $100.

Meanwhile, Adaza disclosed that six contestants have already signed up for the Ms. *Pusong Pinoy,* a beauty pageant open to young females ages 16 to 25 years old.

Slots are also open for food and non-food vendors that want to sell their merchandise at the whole-day event to be held at the Civic Center grounds in Susupe on Feb. 12. Rates for the 10x20 tent space are $50 for food and $40 for non-food. Slots will be raffled off to promote fairness and avoid favoritism issues.

"We are encouraging interested contestants for the cooking contest, the beauty pageant, vendors, and performing groups to sign up and take part in this fun and exciting Valentine event for the community," said Adaza.

For more information, call Bok Enano at 287-9756, Annamae Adaza at 483-5237 or Olive Yana at 285-7893.

Prosecutors: Corona's statement of assets undervalued

By CATHY C. YAMSUAN, CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA, TJ BURGONIO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

House prosecutors accusing Chief Justice Renato Corona of amassing ill-gotten wealth on Thursday showed evidence that he had undervalued his properties in his officially declared assets.

Based on his statement of assets, liabilities and net worth submitted to the Senate on Wednesday, Corona's net worth was P14 million in 2002, jumping to P22 million in 2010 when he became chief magistrate.

The documents introduced Thursday showed that Corona declared a property at the swank La Vista in Quezon City at P3 million when it was bought for P16 million; the Bellagio penthouse in Taguig at P6.8 million acquired for P14.5 million; a unit in the Ridge, also in Taguig, at P2.3 million bought for P9 million; the Burgundy condo in Quezon city at P921,000 taken at P2.5 million; and the Columns condominium in Makati P1.2 million that was purchased for P3.5 million.

But the prosecution was also put on the spot over questions on whether the properties shown in the documents carried to the court by officials of the Register of Deeds in Taguig City and Quezon City were related to any of the eight articles of impeachment against Corona.

Senator Francis Escudero told prosecutors from the House of Representatives that Article 2 of the verified complaint was taking Corona to task only for his alleged failure to disclose to the public his SALN.

"As a judge, I am at a loss on Article 2, to be honest," he manifested in Filipino on the fourth day of the impeachment trial.

Escudero said the second article of impeachment accused Corona of "three separate acts" when each article in the complaint "must accuse the respondent of a singular, separate act."

AP

Lawyer Randy Rutaquiao takes his oath to become the third witness to testify in the ongoing impeachment trial of Philippine Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona Thursday Jan.19, 2012 at the Philippine Senate in Manila, Philippines.

Besides the alleged nondisclosure of SALNs, the verified complaint said: "It is reported that some of the properties of respondent are not included in his declaration of his assets, liabilities and net worth, in violation of the Anti-graft and Corrupt Practices Act."

Alleged vagueness of Article 2

Also under Article 2 is the allegation that "respondent is likewise suspected and accused of having accumulated ill-gotten wealth, acquiring assets of high values and keeping bank accounts with huge deposits."

Minority Leader Senator Alan Peter Cayetano also expressed misgivings on the same Article 2 and particularly pointed out the words "reported" and "suspected" in the particular charge. He asked whether the presentation of Corona's SALNs to the impeachment court on Wednesday would put the matter to rest.

"I'm trying to figure out what the prosecution is charging the Chief Justice [with]," he said.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile ordered the prosecution and the defense to submit their respective legal memorandums, stating their position on the alleged vagueness of Article 2. But he also mentioned that "the ultimate fact to be considered here is the issue of disclosure (of the SALNs)."

Condominium certificates

Randy A. Rutaquio and Carlo Alcantara, heads of the offices of the Register of Deeds in Taguig City and Quezon City, respectively, submitted certified true copies of condominium certificates of title (CCT) under the name of Corona, his wife Cristina and their children.

Rep. Elpidio Barzaga said the controversial 303.5-square meter penthouse in The Bellagio Goldview Residences in Taguig that indicated Megaworld Corp. as the seller and the couple as the buyer was covered by CCT 19497. The House prosecutor said that the property included three parking slots.

"The selling price indicated in the deed of absolute sale is P14,510,225. The deed is dated Dec 16, 2009," the prosecutor said.

At this point, Cuevas moved "to strike out all subsequent manifestation from counsel" related to the properties.

"I'm very sure this is no longer in connection with SALN but rather of a different aspect of the impeachment complaint, which is the alleged acquisition of ill-gotten wealth. We made this manifestation. We have a standing objection," he reminded the court.

Cuevas said paragraph 2.4 of the impeachment complaint accused Corona of "having allegedly acquired ill-gotten wealth [and] assets of high value and keeping bank accounts with huge deposits."

"I said there could be no evidence that could be admitted regarding ill-gotten wealth. Allegation of suspicion does not suffice in the rules of pleadings. Therefore, there can be no acceptance of evidence. That is jurisprudence," he noted.

World Bank report details Philippine loan misuse

By TERESA CEROJANO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The World Bank says it wants a refund of a portion of its $21.9 million loan to the Philippine Supreme Court to support judicial reforms after a review uncovered the misuse of funds.

A bank memorandum submitted to Philippine officials last month says the Judicial Reform Support Project is a "high risk" and its financial statements "can no longer be relied upon."

A copy of the bank's report, released Wednesday by the Philippine Finance Department, asks that $199,900 "ineligible expenditures" be refunded by the end of the month. They include objectionable disbursements for travels and purchases of computers.

The World Bank has acknowledged the document's existence but has not released it to the public.

Midas Marquez, a spokesman for the court, said its Project Management Office has been directed to address the report.

The report specifically identified Marquez and impeached Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona by their position but not by name.

According to the report, Marquez headed the bids and awards committee for the project and was authorized by Corona to approve payments of up to 500,000 pesos ($11,442). The report called the arrangement a "conflict of interest" that "eliminates internal checks and balances" needed for procurement and disbursement functions.

In four contracts under the project, Marquez requested the services, approved the terms of the contracts, authorized contract extensions and payments to the contractor, and was the end-user of services provided, the bank report said.

The arrangement presents a "conflict of interest" and eliminates internal checks and balances, it added.

The World Bank loan was approved in 2003 to improve the speed in resolving cases and to give the public greater access to justice. But the bank said decision-making and implementation of contracts has been limited to a few personnel, leaving the process with diminished internal controls.

Presidential spokesman Edwin Lacierda told reporters the document is the surest evidence that funds meant for judicial reforms were wasted and basic rules of governance were ignored.

"The findings are scandalous as they are shocking," he said.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said "the leadership of the Supreme Court cannot simply dismiss these very serious observations" and urged it to swiftly respond.

Corona is currently undergoing impeachment trial at the Senate for corruption allegations and accusations he tried to block the prosecution of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who is detained on vote rigging charges.

He has denied wrongdoing.

US, Filipino forces plan drills near disputed area

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—U.S. and Philippine marines plan to hold combat drills at an oil rig in the South China Sea to bolster the defense of such sensitive facilities in a bold move that may provoke protests from China, which claims waters in or near the location.

Lt. Gen. Juancho Sabban, commander of the Philippine military's Western Command, said Thursday the exercises will be held in March or April off western Palawan province and should not alarm China because these will be done within Philippine territorial waters.

The drills involve U.S. Marines training their Philippine counterparts in defending and retaking oil and gas rigs captured by security threats like terrorists, Sabban said, adding military organizers from both sides did not contemplate on China as an imaginary target when they planned the drills.

"We need this special training so we can defend our oil and gas platforms," Sabban told The Associated Press. "We're doing it in an actual oil rig. We have many of these oil rigs we need to protect."

The drills are part of an annual joint military exercises by the longtime defense allies called Balikatan, which aims to improve the capability of the two countries' forces to respond militarily to threats that include terrorists, pirates and smugglers or deal with natural disasters.

The Balikatan or "shoulder-to-shoulder" exercises have mostly been done around the main northern Luzon island in past years but will be held in Palawan for nearly a month starting in mid-March. More than 500 U.S. soldiers and marines, along with their warships and aircraft, will take part in the exercises with about 1,000 Filipino military personnel, Sabban said.

Aside from the combat drills, the military participants will undertake school repairs and medical missions.

"It's an annual exercise and should not cause any concern to China," Sabban said.

Still, the Balikatan exercises may likely invite Chinese protests.

Palawan province lies near the Spratlys, a potentially oil- and gas-rich chain of islands, shoals, coral outcrops and sand bars being disputed by China and the Philippines, along with Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei. The Spratlys have long been feared as Asia's next potential flashpoint for conflict.

China, which claims virtually all of the South China Sea on historical grounds, has routinely protested military exercises near the disputed territories. The Chinese Embassy in Manila did not immediately respond to an AP request for a comment.

Sabban said the upcoming oil rig drills will be held in Philippine waters northwest of Palawan near an area called Malampaya, site of the country's largest natural gas field.

The AP has learned that China last year claimed new territory in or near the venue of the planned drills.

China protested in July a publicly-announced plan by the Philippine government to explore for oil and gas in waters called "areas 3 and 4," the nearest point of which lies less than 50 miles (80 kilometers) from Palawan. The Philippines has dismissed China's claims, arguing the areas were well within the country's territorial waters and too far off mainland China, Energy Undersecretary Jose Layug Jr. has said.

The new areas being claimed by China are not part of the Spratlys.

The Philippines has appropriated more funds to protect Malampaya and outlying waters and secure foreign companies exploring for oil and gas, Budget Secretary Florencio Abad said Thursday.

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

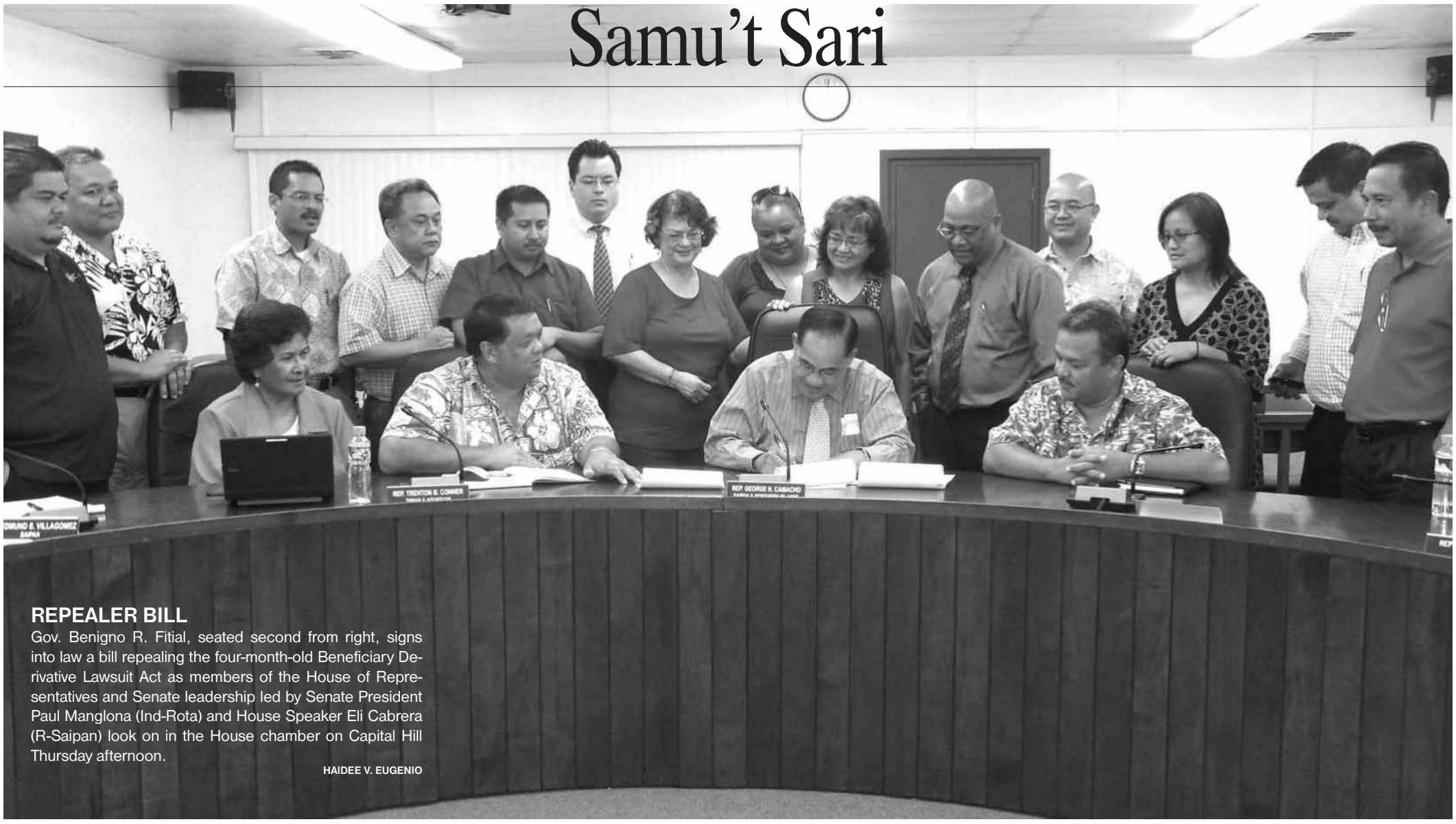
Philippines cuts interest rates to boost economy

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines' central bank says it has cut interest rates by a quarter percentage point to boost the economy while the inflation outlook is benign and the world economy is tipping toward a further slowdown. Central bank Gov. Amando Tetangco said the bank's Monetary Board decided on the rate cuts Thursday. They are the first since 2009 and follow similar moves by other emerging markets to ease monetary policy. The interest rate paid by the central bank to lenders for overnight deposits has been cut to 4.25 percent, and the rate borrowers pay for overnight borrowing from the central bank to 6.25 percent. Tetangco says average annual inflation is forecast to fall within the lower half of a 3 percent to 5 percent range up to 2013.

Gov't seeing clearer signs of higher growth

The government is seeing clearer signs of higher economic growth for 2012 as indicators used for economic forecasting showed positive growth for the third straight quarter this January-March period. The National Statistical Coordination Board said composite leading economic indicators (LEI) for the first quarter settled at 0.238, improving by 0.08 point from the 0.158 recorded in the previous quarter. The composite LEI, designed to gauge potential for near-term growth, has been trending upward after a 0.002-point dip in the second quarter of 2011. "Continued improvement of the composite LEI indicated 'a positive outlook for the country's economy,'" NCSB director general Romulo A. Virola said in a statement. "The latest LEI computations show the index in firmer positive territory, auguring well for the domestic economy to start off the Year of the Dragon," Virola said. ***(PDI)***

Samu't Sari



REPEALER BILL
Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, seated second from right, signs into law a bill repealing the four-month-old Beneficiary Derivative Lawsuit Act as members of the House of Representatives and Senate leadership led by Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) and House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) look on in the House chamber on Capital Hill Thursday afternoon.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

RESCUE OPERATION
Sailors from Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 5 rescue two local fishermen off the rocks in Apra Harbor, Guam Jan. 20. Following routine morning exercises outside the harbor, EODMU 5 divers and technicians spotted the distressed men stranded at the harbor's entrance and assisted them safely to Family Beach near Cabras Island in Piti. The fishing vessel the men were in capsized off the waters of Apra Harbor. The men did not require medical attention but were given water as they appeared dehydrated. "A rescue like this shows the community that EODMU 5 and the military as a whole are standing by and ready to assist anytime and any place," said boat operator Navy Diver 2nd Class (DSW/AW/SW) Jonathan R. Peglow. "The actions of my fellow EODMU 5 Sailors demonstrates that our training and dedication can make a difference."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

To our mother, Rosario Camacho White, on her birthday today: No precious stone or metal could ever compare to your loving heart. No flower or bouquet could ever compare to your ageless beauty. Also, belated happy birthday to our hardworking and dedicated father, Michael White! No matter how tall a person gets, a father is always someone you can look up to. There are no words can explain just how great a blessing you both are to us!

To the world's greatest, my love, my hero, my everything—happy 23rd birthday to Ben D.M. Lisua! May the Lord continue to bless you with many more years to come and I'd like to thank you baby for all the joy you brought into my life. I love you with every beat of my heart. Your better half, Bel Norita.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Auntie Frances Camacho Keremius, who is celebrating her special day today! The one person who has numerously awed many others with her skills and talent, who never fails to spread her contagious laughter, how wonderful it is to share a special day like today with your sister! Greetings come from your family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Christiana "CJ" B. Agulto, who is celebrating her special day today, Jan. 21. You rock today because it's your birthday! We love you always. This birthday shoutout comes from your family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

Experts see tough road for Kodak to reinvent self

CHICAGO (AP)—Even in bankruptcy, Kodak boasts some enviable strengths: a golden brand, technology firepower that includes a rich collection of photo patents, and more than $4 billion in annual sales of digital cameras, printers, and inks.

But all that may not be enough to revive its declining fortunes in a Chapter 11 overhaul. Kodak is at a crossroads: It could to go the way of fallen Montgomery Ward and Circuit City, two corporate names that never recovered from long declines. Or Kodak could prosper after bankruptcy like General Motors.

Of the many restructuring experts interviewed by The Associated Press on Thursday, none are optimistic that Kodak can make a strong comeback.

Selling select business lines and patents and making the right bets on a limited number of new technology products could allow the Eastman Kodak Co. to survive, several experts said. But none see a path back to anything close to the glory days of the former photography titan.

"You can pick your metaphor: `Stick a fork in them,' `They're over the cliff" -- they're done," said Bill Brandt, chief executive of turnaround consultant Development Specialists Inc. in Chicago. "The Kodak as we know it is done, unequivocally."

The company's only hope, Brandt said, is to reinvent itself as an intellectual property company. But first it will have to put its patent portfolio up for sale and determine whether it wants to sell them based on what's offered, he said, or retain them and try to remake the company over a period of years.

Kodak said only that it has appointed a chief restructuring officer to head the effort: Dominic DiNapoli, vice president of FTI Consulting. It expects to complete its U.S.-based restructuring next year.

Whatever the company does now is likely to be too little, too late, said Gary Adelson, managing director of turnaround firm NHB Advisors in Los Angeles.

"I can't imagine a big future for Kodak," said Adelson, who thinks the company should just sell its assets. "I think it's going to be another one of those companies that didn't make the transition to the future."

Some experts think the company can get by once it cuts debt by reducing pension and employee benefit costs in bankruptcy, then disposes of its least valuable products.

Only a much leaner, more focused Kodak can survive, said Haresh Sapra, an accounting professor and bankruptcy specialist at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. "They probably should go back to basics and focus on one or two of those business lines that are self-sustaining," he said.

The primary hope lies in digital businesses that generated some $4.5 billion in revenue last year, an amount Kodak said accounted for about 75 percent of total sales. That includes consumer devices such as self-service photo kiosks, printers and high-volume document scanners.

"If they can take their existing products and improve them and make them much cheaper, I see no reason why the company can't emerge with a healthier balance sheet," said Edward Neiger, a partner at New York bankruptcy law firm Neiger LLP. "It's going to be a shell of what the old company was, but I don't think they need to liquidate."

In a statement accompanying the Chapter 11 filing on Thursday, the company touted its "pioneering investments in digital and materials deposition technologies" in recent years.

The best-case scenario for Kodak in the long run may be to end up like Polaroid, suggested Eli Lehrer, who heads the nonprofit Heartland Institute's Center on Finance, Insurance and Real Estate in Washington. The company long known for its instant-film cameras stopped making them and filed for bankruptcy in 2008. The Polaroid name, however, lives on under private ownership, albeit as a much smaller firm.

Kodak has a better brand name, Lehrer said, although "That doesn't necessarily translate to people keeping their jobs, or stockholders keeping anything."

Fewer layoffs, lower inflation give economy a lift

WASHINGTON (AP)—The economy is off to a fast start in 2012.

The outlook for hiring has brightened as applications for unemployment benefits near a four-year low.

Adding to the optimism, inflation remains low, business travel is up and the home market is showing slight gains after three dismal years.

That's the picture sketched by a flurry of data Thursday. It followed other reports that show the economy began the year with vitality: Companies are hiring more, consumer confidence is up, more people are buying cars and factories are making more goods.

Even bank lending, which all but froze during the depths of the financial crisis, is on the rise.

Many economists caution that it's too early to conclude that the recovery is accelerating. "There's no doubt that the economy is getting better; we just shouldn't get carried away," Mark Vitner, an economist at Wells Fargo, said. "We haven't shifted into a higher gear."

Despite six months of solid job growth, unemployment remains painfully high at 8.5 percent. And inflation-adjusted wages fell over the past year.

Housing is still slowing the economic recovery. And a recession in Europe would weaken growth in the United States and elsewhere.

Still, Thursday's reports were encouraging:

■ Fewer people sought unemployment benefits last week than at any time in nearly four years. The seasonally adjusted drop was the steepest in more than six years. It reduced the week's total to just 352,000. The four-week average dropped to 379,000. When applications fall consistently below 375,000, it usually signals that hiring is strong enough to lower the unemployment rate.

■ Manufacturing expanded in the Northeast in January, according to surveys by the Federal Reserve banks of New York and Philadelphia. That followed a report from the Fed that factory output across the country surged in December by the most in a year.

■ Inflation appears to be peaking after surging last year. Consumer prices were unchanged in December, in part because gas is cheaper. Lower inflation gives consumers more spending power. It also gives the Fed leeway to keep interest rates low to help the economy.

■ Spending on business travel rose 7.6 percent last year, the Global Business Travel Association said last week. More business travel benefits companies like Southwest Airlines, which reported higher fourth-quarter net income and revenue.

■ Union Pacific Corp., the nation's largest rail operator, says it transported more cars, oil, industrial parts and chemicals in the final quarter of 2011. CEO Jim Young says he expects the railroad's revenue to continue growing in 2012

■ JPMorgan Chase, the nation's largest bank, said its lending to businesses rose 12 percent in the October-December quarter compared with the same period a year earlier. Its lending to mid-size companies picked up. And at Bank of America, average loans to mid-size businesses grew 4 percent in the last three months of 2011. Tight credit has been a major reason why smaller businesses have been unable to expand and hire more.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Popular file-sharing website Megaupload shut down

McLEAN, Va. (AP)—One of the world's most popular file-sharing sites was shuttered Thursday, and its founder and several company officials were accused of facilitating millions of illegal downloads of films, music and other content. An indictment accused Megaupload.com of costing copyright holders at least $500 million in lost revenue. The indictment was unsealed one day after websites including Wikipedia and Craigslist shut down in protest of two congressional proposals intended to make it easier for authorities to go after websites with pirated material, especially those with headquarters and servers overseas. Megaupload is based in Hong Kong, but some of the alleged pirated content was hosted on leased servers in Ashburn, Va., which gave federal authorities jurisdiction, the indictment said.

Oil steady above $100 as gasoline stocks cap rise

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Oil held steady above $100 a barrel Friday in Asia as signs of economic improvement in the U.S. and Europe were tempered by a rise in gasoline stocks, which suggests weaker demand for crude. Benchmark crude for February delivery was up 11 cents at $100.50 a barrel at midday Kuala Lumpur time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 20 cents to finish at $100.39 on Thursday.

Kodak
As the film fades

Eastman Kodak, the photography company that put picture taking within virtually everyone's reach, is filing for bankruptcy protection.

George Eastman, who said his goal was "to make the camera as convenient as the pencil"

Kodak moments

1881 Company founder George Eastman starts Eastman Dry Plate Co. with Henry Strong; experimenting in his mother's Rochester kitchen, Eastman had developed dry plates, which can be developed at any time, to replace photographic wet plates, that had to be treated at once

1885 First transparent film

1888 First "Kodak" camera – the name was coined by Eastman, who though "K" to be a strong letter – giving birth to amateur, snapshot photography

1889 • The Eastman Company formed
• Transparent roll film makes possible Thomas Edison's motion picture camera

1892 Company renamed Eastman Kodak Company

1898 First folding pocket Kodak camera

1900 The famous Brownie camera; selling price is $1 with film at 15¢ a roll

No. 2 Folding Autographic

No. 2 Brownie (shown left); Eastman's advertising slogan, "You press the button, we do the rest" became equally famous

Logo, circa 1907

1901 Present parent company, Eastman Kodak Company of New Jersey, formed

1929 First film designed for the new sound motion pictures

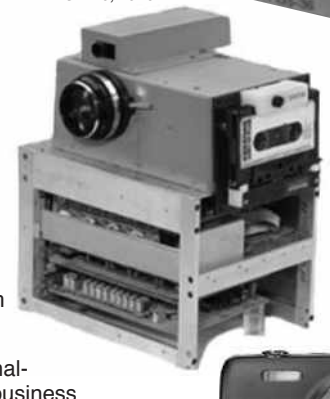
Brownie Target Six-20, 1946

1930 Added to the Dow Jones Industrial Average index; is one of the 30 DJIA companies for 74 years

1935 Iconic Kodachrome, the first 35 mm color film; for decades, Kodak held a virtual monopoly on film, which kept the company profitable

1938 First camera with built-in photoelectric exposure control, the Super Kodak Six-20

1963 The Instamatic, featuring easy-to-use cartridge loading film; more than 50 million were produced from 1963-1970; reduced to pocket-size in 1972



Prototype of the digital camera was the size of a toaster and captured black-and-white images at a resolution of 10,000 pixels

1975 Steven Sasso, an electrical engineer at Kodak, invents the first digital camera, but company keeps its focus on film, then its cash cow

1984 First video system, Kodavision Series 2000 8 mm

1987 First one-time-use camera, the Kodak Fling

1991 Kodak partners with Nikon to market a professional-grade digital camera but sticks with film as core business

2001 Kodak EasyShare digital cameras and docking systems; popular with consumers but made little profit for the company since the margin on digital cameras plummeted

Easy Share 5X wide

2005 Antonio Perez takes over as company head; focuses on consumer and commercial printers in a effort to rescue the company, whose photography products steadily had been losing market share

2012 Kodak files for bankruptcy protection

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Source: Eastman Kodak Company, MCT Photo Service, University of Rochester, Wall Street Journal, BBC,The Atlantic
Graphic: Pat Carr

Nation

Gingrich angrily denies he sought open marriage

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP)—Presidential contender Newt Gingrich on Thursday angrily denied that he asked his second wife for an "open marriage" that would allow him to have a mistress as she claims in an interview broadcast two days before the South Carolina primary.

"Let me be quite clear. The story is false," Gingrich said at a debate, without elaborating.

At the same time, his campaign released his tax returns, showing that he paid more than $994,000 in federal taxes on more $3.1 million in income in 2010.

It was a day of ups and downs for Gingrich, who picked up the endorsement for former rival Texas Gov. Rick Perry. The former House speaker is working to consolidate the support of conservatives behind his candidacy with polls showing him rising in his bid to overtake Republican frontrunner Mitt Romney.

"Newt is not perfect but who among us is," Perry said as he bowed out of the race, seeking to provide Gingrich with some political cover in a state filled with evangelicals likely to cringe at Gingrich's two divorces and acknowledged infidelity.

Gingrich's ex-wife threatened to throw his campaign off course.

In excerpts the network released earlier in the day, Marianne Gingrich told ABC News for a "Nightline" segment that when she discovered Gingrich was having an affair with Callista Bisek, a congressional staffer, he asked his wife to share him.

"And I just stared at him, and he said, `Callista doesn't care what I do,'" Marianne Gingrich told ABC News. "He wanted an open marriage, and I refused."

She confirmed to The Associated Press that the former speaker had asked her for an open marriage, but she refused his request. She declined to comment further. The full segment aired Thursday night some 90 minutes after the debate.

AP

Republican presidential candidate, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, accompanied by his wife Callista, listens to a question during an event, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012, in Bluffton, S.C.

At the debate, Gingrich forcefully denied his ex-wife's charges and castigated debate moderator—CNN's John King—for raising the issue at the start of the two-hour event.

"I think the destructive, vicious, negative nature of much of the news media makes it harder to govern this country, harder to attract decent people to run for public office," Gingrich said. "And I am appalled that you would begin a presidential debate on a topic like that."

As he stood on stage in Charleston, his campaign released his 2010 income tax returns, which showed he paid roughly 31.6 percent of his adjusted income in taxes, giving about 2 percent to charity. Gingrich criticized rival Romney—who is worth more than $250 million—this week for saying he paid only 15 percent.

Gingrich gave $81,133 in cash or checks to charities, about 2.6 percent of his income. That is considerably less than the average of $259,692 that households earning at least $2 million a year gave to charities in 2009, according to research from the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.

Personal financial disclosure forms filed last summer show Gingrich is worth more than $6.5 million. He reported at least $500,000 in assets from Gingrich Productions, his media company that produces books and films.

Two days before the pivotal South Carolina primary, Gingrich's political and private life were clashing just as new polls showed him rising as he looks to overtake Romney in the third state to weigh in on the presidential race. Gingrich has seen his crowds grow in recent days after a strong performance in a debate Monday.

It was unclear how the new revelations from Marianne Gingrich would play in a state where religious and socially conservative voters hold sway. The interview's mere existence shined a spotlight on a part of Gingrich's past that could turn off Republican voters in a state filled with religious and cultural conservatives who may cringe at his two divorces and acknowledged marital infidelities.

Marianne Gingrich has said Gingrich proposed to her before the divorce from his first wife was final in 1981; they were married six months later. Her marriage to Gingrich ended in divorce in 2000, and Gingrich has admitted he'd already taken up with Bisek, the former congressional aide who would become his third wife. The speaker who pilloried President Bill Clinton for his affair with Monica Lewinsky was himself having an affair at the time.

Obama pitches tourism, campaign on East Coast

NEW YORK (AP)—From the Magic Kingdom to the Apollo Theater, President Barack Obama on Thursday made the case for American tourism and his own re-election bid, mingling his political and economic agendas as he tried to stay ahead of the Republicans chasing after his job.

"I hope you know that the values you cherish, what you stand for, what you believe in, are the things I cherish and I believe in and I'm willing to fight for," Obama said at Daniel, an exclusive Manhattan restaurant, in the first of four glitzy fundraisers.

Presidential politics were not far from the surface during events on both ends of the East Coast, as Obama sought a piece of Florida's political spotlight ahead of a Jan. 31 Republican presidential primary with a high-profile appearance at Walt Disney World. Against the backdrop of Disney's Cinderella castle, Obama announced initiatives aimed at making it easier for citizens of China and Brazil to visit the United States.

"America is open for business," Obama said under Florida's picture-perfect blue skies. "We want to welcome you."

Later, the president told top donors in New York that he had made American foreign policy stronger during his first term, vowing that U.S. support for Israel's security is "nonnegotiable." He also defended his administration's approach to Iran, saying even Tehran has acknowledged that U.S. sanctions are having an impact.

The New York itinerary included a $35,800 per ticket fundraiser at the home of film director Spike Lee and an event starting at $100 per ticket at the famed Apollo Theater featuring performances by Al Green and India.Arie. Obama, who raised more than $220 million for his campaign and the Democratic National Committee through the end of 2011, told supporters that the 2012 campaign would be difficult.

"This is still going to be a tough race, regardless of who they nominate," he said, but told donors at another event that he was "very confident" of winning re-election.

Urban US Chinatowns wane as Asians head to suburbs

WASHINGTON (AP)—America's historic Chinatowns, home for a century to immigrants seeking social support and refuge from racism, are fading as rising living costs, jobs elsewhere and a desire for wider spaces lure Asian-Americans more than ever to the suburbs.

As the Lunar New Year begins Monday, annual festivities in Washington, D.C.'s shriveled Chinatown are, for the first time, being promoted by a large marketing firm. New York's Chinatown, one of the nation's oldest, has lost its status as home to the city's largest Chinese population, based on the 2010 census.

Shifts also are under way in Los Angeles, Boston, Houston, San Francisco and Seattle, where shiny new "satellite Chinatowns" in the suburbs and outer city limits rival if not overshadow the originals.

"The traditional Chinatown is changing, and in most cities it is no longer the residential, political and cultural center of Asian-American life that it once was," said Wei Li, an Arizona State University professor who chairs the Census Bureau's advisory committee on the Asian population.

She explained that urban Chinatowns continue to serve a role for newly arrived immigrants with less education or lower skills who seek entry-level work, as well as for elderly residents with poor English skills who can't drive. But middle-class families are almost nowhere to be found, and in many cities, rising downtown property costs and urban gentrification threaten their traditional existence.

"Some have become functional as tourist attractions," Li said.

Signs of Chinatown decline can be seen in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, home to the nation's largest Asian-American population at 1.9 million. There, Monterey Park, deemed part of an "ethnoburb" outside Los Angeles after it became majority Asian-American in the 1990s, has long been a first stopping point for newly arrived Chinese seeking bigger houses away from downtown Los Angeles.

Due to fast growth, the Asian-American suburban population has spread to other areas of California's San Gabriel Valley and more recently to Irvine, where their share of the population jumped from 30 to 39 percent over the last decade.

10,000 evacuated as brush fire burns toward Reno

RENO, Nev. (AP)—Wind gusts of up to 82 mph pushed a fast-moving brush fire south of Reno out of control Thursday as it burned several homes, threatened dozens more and forced about 10,000 people to evacuate their neighborhoods.

Reno Fire Chief Michael Hernandez said more than 230 firefighters were battling the blaze, which had grown to nearly 5 square miles within hours.

Hernandez confirmed "several" homes had been destroyed. He said he didn't know the exact number but told reporters "the news is not good."

There were no immediate reports of any deaths or injuries.

A Reno television station reported at least 10 homes had burned since the fire broke out about 12:45 p.m. along U.S. Highway 395.

Washoe County officials declared a state of emergency a few hours later, and Gov. Brian Sandoval followed with a statewide declaration.

A five-mile stretch of U.S. 395 was closed as the strong winds pushed the flames north toward Reno along the base of the hillsides, Washoe County sheriff's Deputy Armando Avina said. Heavy smoke reduced visibility to zero.

By nightfall, the fire had burned to the city's southern outskirts. Flames were visible 10 miles away in the downtown casino district.

"It's moving at a very fast rate," Avina said. "The winds are extremely powerful in this area."

The winds died down after nightfall and rain started falling, much to the delight of fire crews.

Deputies went door to door asking people to leave their homes in Pleasant Valley, Old Washoe Valley and Saint James Village, Avina said. They evacuated about 300 students from Pleasant Valley Elementary School.

Erika Minnberry, 28, said she didn't become concerned at first because smoke from the fire appeared far enough away. "Probably 30 minutes later, it was up to our house because of the high winds," she said. "I felt pure survival adrenaline. When we drove away, the smoke was so thick, we could barely see ahead of us. Now I feel anxiety. I couldn't find my two cats at the time and I hope they're OK."

KRNV-TV reported that 10 homes had burned, including a half dozen in the Washoe Valley Estates neighborhood. The Reno Gazette-Journal reported explosions could be heard in the area.

Firefighters had zero containment of the blaze and were concentrating on using crews and trucks to protect homes in the path of the flames, Hernandez said.

He estimated firefighters had saved about 1,000 structures and said another 80 to 120 firefighters were expected to arrive on scene before midnight.

"To say we are in the thick of battle is an understatement," he told reporters.

Martinez said the fire was "almost a carbon copy" of a huge wild fire on the edge of the Sierra foothills that destroyed 30 homes in southwest Reno in November.

"It is a wind-driven event and a combination urban-wildland fire," he said.

Like in that fire, Martinez said, strong winds and dry conditions helped fuel the latest blaze. The Reno area had gone a winter-record 56 days without any precipitation until light snow fell earlier this week.

More wet weather was forecast Friday, and snow was forecast Friday night. But high winds were expected to continue, with gusts up to 40 mph.

Asia

Radiation, rusty metal seen in tsunami-hit reactor

TOKYO (AP)—Radiation-blurred images taken inside one of Japan's tsunami-hit nuclear reactors Thursday showed steam, unidentified parts and rusty metal surfaces scarred by 10 months' exposure to heat and humidity.

The photos that were the first inside look since the disaster found none of the reactor's melted fuel or its cooling water but confirmed stable temperatures and showed no major damage or ruptures caused by the earthquake last March, said Junichi Matsumoto, spokesman for the plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co.

Pipes and grates inside the reactor's containment vessel were seen in some images. Other photos were dark and blurry, resembling abstract paintings. Experts are studying the most obscured photos to identify which reactor parts are there. Radiation was visible as static, or electronic interference with the equipment being used.

The photos also showed the inner wall of the container had been heavily deteriorated by the high temperatures and humidity, Matsumoto said.

TEPCO workers inserted the endoscope—an industrial version of the kind of endoscope doctors use—through a hole in the beaker-shaped container at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant's No. 2 reactor, hoping the first look inside since the crisis would help them better assess reactor conditions and make repairs.

High temperatures and radiation leaks had prevented the close-up view until now. Results of the 70-minute operation were mixed.

"Given the harsh environment that we had to operate, we did quite well. It's a first step," Matsumoto said. "But we could not spot any signs of fuel, unfortunately."

He said it would take more time and a better technology to get to the melted fuel, most of which has fallen straight down into the area that the endoscope could not reach. TEPCO hopes to use the endoscope to look inside the two other reactors that had meltdowns but that also would require customization of the equipment and further reduction of radiation levels.

The endoscope failed to find the water surface, indicating less-than-expected levels inside the primary containment vessel and questioning the accuracy of water monitors, Matsumoto said.

AP

This photo taken by a remote-controlled endoscope and released by Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) shows structures assumed to be small size piping or cable conduit inside the beaker-shaped containment vessel of No. 2 reactor at the damaged Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant in Okuma town, Fukushima prefecture, north of Tokyo, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012.

Radiation-tainted cooling water has been leaking from all three damaged reactors, pooling in massive amounts around the nuclear plant. Determining the No. 2 reactor's water levels could have helped locate cracks or damage causing some of the leaks.

Better assessment will help workers know how best to plug holes and cracks in the containment vessel—a protective chamber outside the core—to contain the radiation leaks and gradually work toward dismantling the reactors.

Three of six reactors at the Fukushima plant melted down after the March 11 earthquake and tsunami knocked out the plant's cooling systems and set off the world's worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl.

TEPCO and nuclear officials have said that melted fuel probably fell to the bottom of the core in each unit, most likely breaching the bottom of the core and falling into the primary containment vessel, some dropping to its concrete floor.

Experts have said those are simulation results and that exact location and condition of the fuel could not be known until they have a first-hand observation inside.

6 NATO troops die in Afghanistan helicopter crash

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A NATO helicopter has crashed in southern Afghanistan, killing six members of the international military force, the U.S.-led coalition said Friday.

A coalition statement said that there was no enemy activity in the area at the time of Thursday's crash.

The cause of the crash is still being investigated. The coalition did not disclose the nationalities of those killed.

The helicopter crash occurred on the same day that a suicide car bomber killed at least seven civilians outside a crowded gate at Kandahar Air Field, a sprawling base for U.S. and NATO operations in the south. The Taliban insurgents claimed responsibility, saying they were targeting a NATO convoy.

It was the second suicide bombing in as many days in southern Afghanistan, officials said. The coalition said no NATO troops were killed Thursday. It does not disclose information about wounded troops.

The Taliban have been stepping up attacks in southern Afghanistan, the birthplace of the insurgency, with a wave of bombings and the assassinations of three local Afghan officials this week. The violence comes even as the U.S. is moving ahead with plans for negotiating with the Taliban to try to end the 10-year-old war in Afghanistan.

Two witnesses told The Associated Press that they suspect Thursday's suicide car bomber was trying to hit U.S. troops because he detonated his explosives just as two pickup trucks, which they say are often used by American special forces, were leaving the base.

Taliban spokesman Qari Yousef said that NATO forces opened fire after the bombing and that they killed three of the seven civilians who died. The coalition denied this, saying there was no fighting after the blast.

Earlier, officials reported that the suicide bomber was walking near the gate, but the Afghan Ministry of Interior later said the attacker was driving a Toyota Corolla.

Zalmai Ayubi, the spokesman for the Kandahar provincial governor, said two children were among the seven civilians killed. He said eight other civilians, including two children and one woman, were injured in the explosion.

Gates to the larger U.S. bases in Afghanistan often are crowded with trucks waiting to deliver goods and services, and local Afghans going to or coming back from jobs on the compounds.

Safiullah, a 40-year-old fuel tank driver from neighboring Zabul province, was waiting his turn to enter the base when the blast occurred.

"There was dust and smoke everywhere," said Safiullah, who uses just one name. "I got down on my knees. When the smoke lifted, I moved closer. I saw two children dead at the side of the road."

Bangladesh military says it has foiled coup plot

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—The Bangladesh military said Thursday it foiled a plot by a group of hardline officers, their retired colleagues and Bangladeshi conspirators living abroad to overthrow Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The coup attempt underscored tension between Hasina's government and elements of the military that has lingered since a 2009 mutiny.

Brig. Gen. Muhammad Masud Razzaq told a news conference the military has specific evidence that up to 16 current and former Bangladeshi military officers "with extreme religious views" were involved in the "heinous conspiracy."

The plot was instigated by Bangladeshi conspirators living abroad, he added.

Two retired officers—Lt. Col. Ehsan Yusuf and Maj. Zakir—have been arrested, Razzaq said, but he did not say when. Authorities are also looking for another fugitive serving officer, Maj. Ziaul Haq, he said.

He said Haq fled his post after the arrest of Yusuf and Zakir.

In 2009, just two months after Hasina took office after sweeping a general election, Bangladesh border guards mutinied over complaints over pay, perks and promotion prospects. At least 74 military commanders were killed, many of them the commanders of the mutineers.

AP

Brigadier General Mohammad Masud Razzak addresses a press conference in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012.

Military officials were furious with Hasina for not ordering an assault on the compound, but instead ending the standoff by offering an amnesty to the mutineers that was later rescinded.

Since then, the military has been pressing for an early trial of the mutineers. Hasina's government is trying more than 800 border guards on charges of killing, arson and looting in Dhaka. Hundreds who mutinied at locations outside the capital have been tried already and sentenced to prison.

It's not clear why the alleged coup participants are being described as religious fanatics. Hasina banned Islamic militant groups after taking office in 2009 and has warned in recent speeches that such groups are "conspiring against her elected government."

Bangladesh, a parliamentary democracy since 1990, has witnessed two presidents slain in military coups and 19 other failed coup attempts.

Hasina's father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding leader of Bangladesh, was assassinated in the country's first military coup in 1975.

Another coup in 1981 killed army general-turned-president Ziaur Rahman, husband of ex-prime minister and Hasina's main rival Khaleda Zia.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Myanmar president says no turning back on reforms

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's president says there's no turning back on democratic reforms and is urging the West to lift sanctions on his country. He has even dangled the possibility of giving opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi a Cabinet post. President Thein Sein says in an interview in Friday's Washington Post: "We are on the right track to democracy... We don't have any intention to draw back." Thein Sein's government took office in March, ending a half century of military rule. Since then, it has rolled out reforms at a pace that has surprised even Myanmar's staunchest critics. He said if Suu Kyi wins a seat in parliament and lawmakers elect her into government "we will have to accept that she becomes a Cabinet minister."

Monkey long believed extinct found in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Scientists working in the dense jungles of Indonesia have "rediscovered" a large, gray monkey so rare it was believed by many to be extinct. They were all the more baffled to find the Miller's Grizzled Langur in an area well outside its previously recorded home range. The team set up camera traps in the Wehea Forest on the eastern tip of Borneo island in June, hoping to captures images of clouded leopards, orangutans and other wildlife known to congregate at several mineral salt licks. The pictures that came back caught them all by surprise.

3 shark attacks in Australia in less than 3 weeks

SYDNEY (AP)—A snorkeling guide was attacked by a 10-foot (3-meter) tiger shark off a remote beach in Australia's third attack this month. That's as many attacks as the country generally sees in an entire year. David Pickering, 26, was leading a group of snorkelers through a lagoon at Western Australia's Coral Bay on Thursday when the shark swam up to him and sunk its teeth into his arm. "I turned around and boom, there he was," Pickering told reporters. "(The force) was enough to actually bring me forward and under him because I scraped my knee on his belly." Pickering said he punched the shark with his other arm and it backed off. He then yelled at the other snorkelers—a couple and their two children—to get out of the water before swimming the 300 feet (100 meters) back to shore.

World

Woman with Italian ship captain defends his effort

ROME (AP)—A young Moldovan woman who says she was called to the bridge of the stricken Costa Concordia to help evacuate Russian passengers defended the embattled captain on Thursday, saying he worked tirelessly and "saved over 3,000 lives."

Domnica Cemortan, who says she was translating Capt. Francesco Schettino's orders during the frenzied evacuation, has emerged as a potential new witness in the investigation into the officer's actions the night the ship ran aground.

Schettino is under house arrest, facing possible charges of manslaughter, abandoning ship and causing a shipwreck after he made an unauthorized detour from the programmed route that caused the vessel to slam into a reef and capsize off the Tuscan island of Giglio. At least 11 people were killed and 21 are missing.

Meanwhile, a new audiotape of the doomed vessel's first communications with maritime authorities showed the ship's officers continued to report only an electrical problem for more than 30 minutes after hitting the reef.

Attention has focused on Cemortan amid reports by crew and passengers that Schettino was seen eating dinner with a Russian-speaking woman at the time of the impact. The 25-year-old Cemortan speaks Russian and had worked as a hostess for the Italian cruise operator, although her contract had expired and she was vacationing with friends when she boarded the luxury liner hours before the Jan. 13 disaster.

"I saw him at the restaurant. He was with a blonde woman. He did not look drunk. They were just eating," a Filipino cocktail waitress, Gladly Balderama, said of Schettino.

Another Filipino crew member, Roger Barsita, said he served Schettino and a woman dinner.

"I have no idea who she is," he told The Associated Press in Manila. "Some of the waiters said she's Russian."

In interviews with Moldovan media, Cemortan said she was dining with "colleagues, so to speak" in the ship's restaurant when the ship struck the reef. She said she was summoned to the bridge to translate instructions for passengers, particularly Russians, since she speaks several languages. Moldova is a former Soviet republic.

"All our colleagues made announcements in different languages because there was a problem with the electricity. It was very dark on the ship," she told the Moldovan daily Adevarul. "I stayed on the bridge in case the captain needed me to make an announcement. There were about 20 more officers, cruise directors and the captain."

She defended Schettino and crew members against criticism of a chaotic evacuation, saying they saved thousands of lives.

"He did a great thing. He saved over 3,000 lives," she told Moldova's Jurnal TV.

Prosecutor Francesco Verusio declined to comment on Italian media reports that Cemortan was being sought as a witness, citing the ongoing investigation.

Divers, meanwhile, were focusing on an evacuation route on the ship's fourth level, now about 60 feet (18 meters) below the surface, where five bodies were found earlier this week, Navy spokesman Alessandro Busonero told Sky TG 24. Crews set off small explosions to blow holes into hard-to-reach areas for easier access by divers.

Seven of the dead were identified Thursday by authorities—four French passengers, one Spanish and one Italian passenger and one Peruvian crew member. Italian passenger Giovanni Masia, who would have turned 86 next week, was buried in Sardinia.

What's next for sunken ship?

What can be expected in the coming days, weeks and maybe even years for the capsized Costa Concordia:

1 Underwater inspections After search and rescue, checks will be done on the part of the hull still underwater

2 Pumping out fuel Ship is carrying 2,400 tons of heavy fuel; will take two to four weeks depending on weather and ship's condition

3 Getting upright Will use process called parbuckling; involves barges with huge winches slowly heaving ship into position

4 Cleaning the inside All spoiled food and passengers' belongings will be removed; items under sea level will be ruined

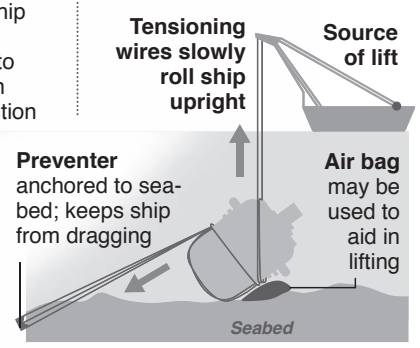
5 Patching the hull Once patched, water will be pumped out and the ship will be stabilized

6 Towing Once upright, tugboats will tow ship away for full repairs

7 Scrapped If damage is too great and patching does not hold, ship may be cut up and taken away in parts

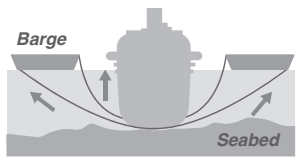
Turning a ship

Ship will be turned upright bit by bit with winches from a nearby crane

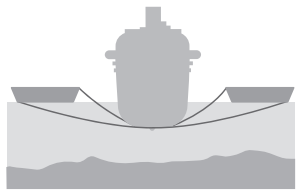

Tensioning wires slowly roll ship upright
Source of lift
Preventer anchored to seabed; keeps ship from dragging
Air bag may be used to aid in lifting
Seabed

Moving a ship

Barges on each side of ship



As water is pumped out and hull repaired, ship rises; towed away



© 2012 MCT
Source: BBC, International Salvage Union, SMIT

Graphic: Melina Yingling

Pope hits out at 'radical secularism'

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Benedict XVI says Roman Catholics in the U.S. need to understand the "grave threats" to their faith posed by what he calls radical secularism in the political and cultural arenas.

He addressed visiting U.S. bishops Thursday and used the same language in warning that attempts are being made to erode their religious freedom.

Benedict XVI

Benedict did not explicitly mention it, but the bishops have complained their religious freedom is eroding in the face of growing acceptance of gay marriage and attempts to marginalize faith. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has recently formed a committee on protecting religious liberty and hired attorneys and a lobbyist to work on the issue.

The pope said many of the bishops have complained about attempts to deny conscientious objection with regard to cooperation in "intrinsically evil practices." U.S. church leaders have been pressing for a broader religious exception to part of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul that mandates private insurers pay for contraception. The Obama administration has not yet made a decision on the policy and the timing is uncertain.

Bishops also are pressing for broader religious exemptions in U.S. states that have legalized same-gender civil unions or marriage. The vast network of Catholic social services in the United States includes adoption and foster-care placement. Bishops in some states have either shut down adoption programs or have lost their government contracts after refusing to place children with same-gender couples.

Benedict also expressed appreciation that bishops have been more outspoken about American Catholic politicians who don't follow church teaching on abortion and other issues.

The pope said Catholics in political life have a "personal responsibility to offer public witness to their faith, especially with regard to the great moral issues of our time."

American Catholics have bitterly debated the obligations of Catholic lawmakers to oppose government policies that go against core Catholic teaching. In recent years, a small but growing number of local bishops have publicly told Catholic lawmakers who support abortion rights not to present themselves for Holy Communion because of their stance on the issue.

The White House had no response to the pope's remarks.

Officials of Catholic-affiliated institutions that have asked for a broader conscience exception to the birth control coverage requirement are frustrated that the administration has yet to make its ruling.

World not quite as hot in 2011; ranks 11th warmest

WASHINGTON (AP)—The world last year wasn't quite as warm as it has been for most of the past decade, government scientists said Thursday, but it continues a general trend of rising temperatures.

The average global temperature was 57.9 degrees Fahrenheit, making 2011 the 11th hottest on record, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said. That's 0.9 degrees warmer than the 20th century average, officials said. In fact, it was hotter than every year last century except 1998.

One reason 2011 was milder than recent years was the La Nina cooling of the central Pacific Ocean. La Ninas occur every few years and generally cause global temperatures to drop, but this was the warmest La Nina year on record.

And 2011 also was the warmest year on record for Spain and Norway, and the second warmest for the United Kingdom. In the United States, the average temperature of 53.8 was just 1 degree above normal, making last year only the 23rd warmest on record. But 17 cities—including Houston, Miami, Trenton and Austin—had their warmest years.

This marks the 35th straight year that global temperatures were warmer than normal. NOAA's records for world average temperatures date back to 1880.

"It would be premature to make any conclusion that we would see any hiatus of the longer-term warming trend," said Tom Karl, director of NOAA's National Climatic Data Center. "Global temperatures are continuing to increase."

NASA, which calculates global temperatures in a slightly different way, announced essentially the same temperature for the year. But NASA's record-keeping calls it the ninth warmest ever.

Both NASA climate scientist James Hansen and University of Victoria's Andrew Weaver said they expect that in the next few years the world will set yet a new record high temperature. 2010 tied for the hottest on record.

NOAA also released new figures for extreme weather. The agency recalculated the number of billion-dollar weather disasters in the U.S., bumping the total from 12 to 14. Officials added Tropical Storm Lee, which dumped rain from Maryland to New England in September, and a July hail and wind storm in Colorado to the list.

The 14 extreme events smash the old record of nine billion-dollar disasters in 2008.

"America has endured an unusually large number of extreme events, totaling damages of more than $55 billion," NOAA deputy administrator Kathryn Sullivan said. She blamed a variety of factors, including population changes.

For the year, a record 58 percent of the United States had either extreme rainfall or severe drought, about triple what is normal for the country.

Arab League considers extension of Syria mission

BEIRUT (AP)—Syrian government tanks and armored vehicles have pulled back from an embattled mountain town near Damascus, activists and witnesses said Thursday, but at least 16 people were killed by security forces elsewhere as a monthlong Arab League fact-finding mission expired.

The pullback from Zabadani left the town under the control of the opposition, activists said. The besieged town of Zabadani has witnessed heavy exchanges of fire between army troops and anti-government military defectors over the past six days.

The 10-month uprising against Syrian President Bashar Assad has turned increasingly militarized and chaotic as more frustrated regime opponents and army defectors arm themselves and fight back against government forces. The capital has seen three suicide bombings since late December which the government blamed on terrorist extremists.

Arab League foreign ministers will consider extending the League's observer mission in Syria in a meeting Sunday in Cairo, officials said Thursday.

Although the mission expired Thursday, Adnan al-Khudeir, head of Cairo operations room that handles reports by the monitors, told The Associated Press that observers will remain in Syria until a decision is made on Sunday.

According to al-Khudeir, the meeting chaired by the Qatari foreign minister will discuss a report by the head of the mission Gen. Mohammed Ahmed al-Dabi who is arriving in Cairo from Syria on Thursday.

The monitors will remain in 17 different places around Syria until the Arab League makes a final decision, he says.

"If there is a decision to extend the mission of the observers, we are ready to send more monitors after training them in three days," he said, adding that the total number of monitors might reach 300.

The mission has been mired in controversy, with the opposition claiming it served as a cover for the regime to continue its brutal crackdown against protesters.

Rejecting charges that the observers have been ineffective in reducing violence, another official said extending the mission would help the opposition more than the regime.

"The killings are less, the protests increase," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity because no decision has been made. "The mission's presence offers assurance to the people because the observers can spot any violations. There is a conviction even among Syria opponents that the extension is better than withdrawal."

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said Thursday the monitors have had a "mixed picture" of results, enabling some protests and some media coverage, but violence continues.

"We believe that we've got to increase the economic pressure on the Assad regime to change course," she said.

More than 5,400 people have been killed since the uprising erupted last March.

Young Style

Homeless US teen up for science prize gets a house

FRANK ELTMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BRENTWOOD, New York (AP)—Samantha Garvey and her family had been living in a shelter for several days when they got word the 17-year-old aspiring marine biologist had made it to the semifinals of the prestigious national Intel science competition.

Now, with donations coming in and the county finding them rent-subsidized housing, she'll again be able to do her homework in a home.

"This is just the most amazing thing you could ask for," the diminutive Garvey said at a news conference Friday, surrounded by her parents, brother, sister and a cadre of politicians and school officials.

"We're all in tears here," she said after Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone announced that the Department of Social Services had located a nearby three-bedroom house where the family could live. "This is what we've always wanted."

Garvey is one of 300 teenagers nationwide named this week as semifinalists in the prestigious Intel science competition; finalists will be announced at the end of January. She spent more than two years researching the effects of the Asian short crab on the mussel population in a salt marsh on Long Island, east of New York City.

"What Sam found was that, like after anyone, after being attacked you develop a tough skin of shell," said her science research teacher, Rebecca Grella. "These mussels were able to increase their thickness and protect themselves against their predator."

Grella noted the link between Garvey's challenges and those of the mollusks she studied.

"I do believe that is an amazing metaphor," Grella said, "and I do see Sam as a strong mussel."

The Brentwood High School senior, who has applied to Yale and Brown universities, was evicted along with her family from their home on New Year's Eve. Her mother, Olga, a nurse's assistant, was out of work for eight months following a car accident in February, and her father, Leo, could not keep up with the bills alone on his salary as a cab driver.

Housing prices on Long Island are among the highest in the country, even in Brentwood, which has struggled with gang violence in recent years. A three-bedroom home there recently sold for $291,000, according to Lisa Kennedy, a broker with Eric G. Ramsay Associates. A three-bedroom ranch is renting for $1,800 a month, she said.

The Garveys will pay 30 percent of their monthly income to rent the county-owned property, officials said.

Gregory Blass, the county commissioner of Social Services, said the family was already known to officials because they were staying in a shelter, making them eligible to move into the house. He said the county works to place about 30 to 40 homeless families a month from shelters into apartments or homes. He insisted the Garveys received no preferential treatment because of Samantha's celebrity.

The house is undergoing renovations and should be ready for the Garveys in about 10 days, Bellone said.

Leo Garvey, Samantha's father, said that after the eviction he took his family to a hotel for a week because he did not want them spending New Year's in a homeless shelter. But he finally had to contact Suffolk County Social Services for help last week; they were then placed in a shelter.

AP

Intel Semifinalist Samantha Garvey, 17, displays a handful of mussels which are part of her science project on marine life, Friday, Jan. 13, 2012, at Brentwood High School in Brentwood, NY.

This week came the accolades for Samantha's scientific feat and the offer for the family to live in a home of their own. Her story has gotten coverage nationwide.

Once sponsored by Westinghouse, the Society for Science and the Public has been running the competition since 1942. Over the decades, contest finalists have gone on to some of the greatest achievements in science. Seven have won a Nobel Prize.

Before the eviction, the Garveys had rented a home for six or seven years, Leo Garvey said. Before that, the family had also lived in homeless shelters from time to time; Leo Garvey described himself as a recovering alcoholic.

Samantha said that she had worried for several months before the eviction, knowing that her mother was ailing and money was tight.

"I ordered a senior picture and I said, 'I don't know where to send it. I don't know what's going to happen. What if we move, what if we get evicted,' which we did," she said. "You're out in limbo. You're like, 'What's going to happen to my mail, what's going to happen to my college applications. Where are they all going to go?' It's scary."

Besides the county housing, officials said the Marriott Corp. is donating "several thousand dollars" of furniture for the family to use. Others have offered to pay kennel fees for the family pit bull.

"It's unbelievable; the outpouring of help that we've had," said Leo Garvey.

He made reference to a news conference also held Friday in Suffolk County announcing the latest winner of a Mega Millions lottery jackpot, saying: "I feel richer than that $208 million winner."

US teens struggle to find elusive part-time jobs

By STEPHANIE REITZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—The economic turmoil that has left many Americans without work is having a disproportionate effect on teenage jobseekers, whose quest for entry-level positions often pits them against experienced older workers willing to take any job for a paycheck.

U.S. labor figures show the 2011 unemployment rate nationwide averaged just below 9 percent, but for jobseekers ages 16 to 19, it was almost 25 percent—the third consecutive year in that range, and with some cities recording rates far higher.

Automation has also eliminated many of the after-school, weekend and summer jobs that had been the longtime domain of first-time workers as computerized equipment has helped companies trim positions in everything from local car washes to photocopy shops and supermarkets.

Participants discussing the trend at a forum Tuesday in Hartford say that it's alarming, and that society suffers when an entire generation's chance to learn valuable workplace skills are delayed or denied. On a personal level, it's also a source of growing stress for teenagers who need jobs for experience, pocket money or to help their families.

"My mom doesn't have a lot of money and what she does have, she spends on me and on my brother, so I really want to work and be able to help and take care of some things myself," said Trisana Spence, 16, who moved last year from New York City's Brooklyn borough to Hartford and hopes someday to become a lawyer.

Spence, a junior at the Hartford Culinary Arts Academy high school, might end up with a slight advantage.

She's in a paid internship through her school and the city's Blue Hills Civic Association to learn job skills and will be placed at a yet-undetermined job this summer. She says she'll work extra hard in hopes that the employer will keep her on board even after the summer so she can help pay for household expenses and some extras, such as her 4-year-old brother's karate lessons.

Participants at Tuesday's forum said that partnerships between government and civic groups, businesses, nonprofit agencies and other organizations may be a key factor to helping job-seeking teens, but that those groups face financial hurdles to keep internships and job-training programs going, too.

The White House and U.S. Department of Labor this month kicked off a campaign appealing to the private sector to create 250,000 more summer jobs in businesses, nonprofits and government agencies, with at least 100,000 of them being paid spots.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, a Connecticut Democrat who attended Tuesday's forum, said that initiative and others are critical to ensure teens get a chance to learn job skills and prepare for careers.

"The phenomenon of youth unemployment is sweeping the world, not just Connecticut," said Blumenthal, who credits his first job as a camp counselor with introducing him to mentors and the sense of pride and responsibility that work can instill.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 2011 nationwide unemployment rate of 24.4 percent for teen job-seekers from 16 to 19 years old was the second highest recorded since it started keeping the statistic in the late 1940s. The figures reflect teens actively seeking jobs and do not include those not applying for positions.

The 2010 figure was the highest at 25.9 percent, though it approached 20 percent in the mid-1970s and nudged slightly over that level in 1982 and 1983.

In recent decades, teens had the best luck getting jobs in the boom years around the turn of the millennium, when their unemployment rate was around 13 percent—and those workers, a large part of today's adult workforce, have a track record of experience that often puts them ahead of today's teens in the job hunt.

Nationwide and in cities like Hartford, there's heavy competition for each available job.

Federal labor statistics show there's an average of 4.2 people out of work for each job that's open nationwide depending on industries and regions.

It's no longer enough for teens to be willing to work for entry-level wages, since many displaced experienced workers are also willing to take lower pay for a chance at a regular income, some experts said Tuesday.

Nineteen-year-old Calvin Brown of Bristol sees that first hand. When he was in high school, he felt fortunate to be able to get a few hours of work each week at a local convenience store - "Just about enough to pay for gas," said Brown, now an unpaid intern for U.S. Rep. John Larson, D-Conn.

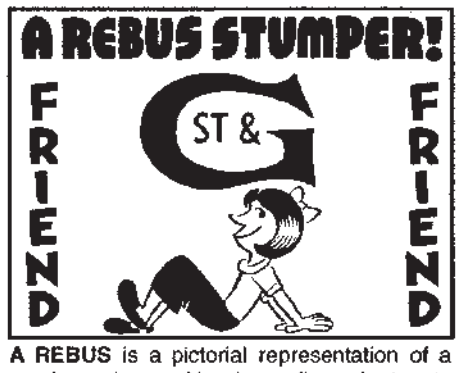
The experience is worth the financial trade-off for Brown, a political science major at Central Connecticut State University, but he said he still sees many of his friends struggle to find jobs.

"A lot of time, it ends up being through connections: `Oh, I'm cleaning floors at my father's shop,' or something like that," Brown said. "But a lot of time, even in the most entry-level jobs, you're competing against someone with a lot of experience."

John Twomey, chief executive officer of the New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals Inc., said the teens' observations are borne out in unemployment figures that show a wide gap between teens seeking jobs and those actually finding them.

"They're not all in basketball camp or backpacking in Europe," he said, jokingly, of those without jobs. "Kids want to work. We're in danger of graduating a whole generation of kids who don't know how to work."

A REBUS STUMPER!



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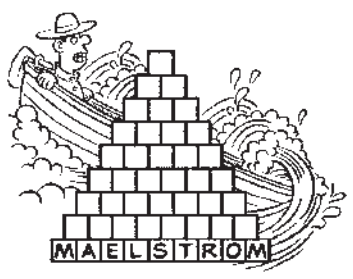
A REBUS is a pictorial representation of a word or phrase. You have five minutes to solve the one above.

Answer: "A misunderstanding between friends." (STANDING is the tough part — ST AND IN G.)

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



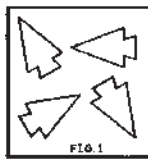
Illustrated by David Coulson

THE PYRAMID OF WORD POWER!

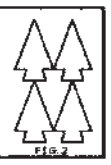
Don't get "dizzy" looking for these words. Starting with the given word MAELSTROM, try dropping one letter at a time as you work your way up so that the remaining letters at each level spell out a new word. The following helpful hints are in ascending order, beginning with MAELSTROM.

1. A violent whirlpool.
2. A small South American monkey.
3. A great composer.
4. A performer of great skill.
5. An intent gaze.
6. To demolish.
7. Body of water.
8. In the same manner.
9. Your grade for this test?

Answers: (From the bottom up): Maelstrom, marmoset, maestro, master, stare, raise, sea, as, A.



A DRAWING WAGER! Bet your friends that they can't draw four arrowheads in such a way that, instead of four, they will have five. Figure 2 shows you how this can be done.



IT'S MAGIC! Use the numbers 11 through 20 to fill in our Magic Square. The numbers in each horizontal row and vertical column should total 75. We've filled in six of the squares. The rest is up to you.

	21	25	
24			22
	27		
			26

[75]

Answers: First row: 18, 21, 25, 11. Second row: 24, 12, 17, 22. Third row: 13, 27, 19, 16. Fourth row: 20, 15, 14, 26.

Cat-proofing your house

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: A friend of mine recently commented that when she brought her new cat home last year, she immediately had to put protective caps on all the electrical outlets because the cat kept trying to stick her claws into them. Do cats really do that? Mine doesn't.—Sarah in Burlington, Vt.

DEAR SARAH: It's not unheard of, as cats are curious, like to explore and often find certain things fascinating (while being totally uninterested in other things, like the expensive catnip-infused designer mouse I bought for my cat last Christmas. Not that I'm bitter about that).

Because of this, and because no one is ever totally sure what a cat will take a keen interest in, cat-proofing the areas in which your cat roams is essential. Make sure it can't access the places where you store cleaning supplies or human food (some of which can be poisonous to cats). Put houseplants, particularly those from the lily family, out of reach -- or even better, out of the house -- as they can be deadly to cats when ingested. Don't let the cat access areas like the garage, workshop or the utility room. Be aware of where your cat is before you open the front door, so that it doesn't slip outside.

Because cats tend to be much more low-maintenance than dogs, most pet owners don't think much about taking precautions keep their cats away from dangerous areas. Do what's necessary to keep them safe from potential hazards.

■ ■ ■

Send your questions or tips to ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. For more pet care-related advice and information, visit www.pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

by Samantha Weaver

■ It was noted 20th-century poet T.S. Eliot who made the following sage observation: "Some editors are failed writers, but so are most writers."

■ The United States' first railroad was built in 1809 in Crown Creek, Pa., by a man named Thomas Leiper. It had wooden tracks.

■ When the now-classic television show "Gilligan's Island" first aired in 1964, critics were not impressed. The review published in the San Francisco Chronicle said, "It is difficult to believe that this show was written, directed and produced by adults. It marks a new low in the networks' estimation of public intelligence." The show went on to air for three seasons and spurred three TV movie sequels.

■ Believing that beards and long hair were too easy for enemies to grab, Alexander the Great ordered his soldiers to shave their faces and heads before going into battle.

■ You hear a lot about the isolationism of Switzerland—the country that's always neutral in any conflict—but you might be surprised to learn how serious they are about it. The country's system of roads is mined in 2,000 places and can be demolished in the space of 10 minutes.

■ Are you doing your share? If you've had a beer today, you've contributed to the approximately 90 million cans of the brew that are consumed by Americans every day.

■ When the territory that later became the state of Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867, the cost came out to about 2 cents per acre.

■ It's not clear why, but it seems that fine hair grows faster than coarse hair.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "My father taught me to work, but not to love it. I never did like to work, and I don't deny it. I'd rather read, tell stories, crack jokes, talk, laugh—anything but work."—Abraham Lincoln

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MAGIC MAZE ● WORDS WITH A WICK

W	D	A	X	U	R	P	M	J	G	R	W	D	A	X
V	S	Q	H	N	K	I	F	D	K	E	O	M	A	X
K	V	B	A	I	L	I	W	I	C	K	L	A	T	Q
O	C	M	R	E	A	S	T	W	I	C	K	H	J	H
F	C	I	D	T	C	H	A	D	W	I	C	K	A	Y
W	W	U	W	R	K	E	N	N	E	W	I	C	K	P
N	L	I	I	G	J	H	F	D	L	S	W	I	B	Z
X	C	V	C	T	D	R	Q	O	D	N	K	W	M	K
K	I	H	K	K	F	E	D	B	N	U	C	R	Z	Y
W	V	T	E	R	E	Q	S	O	A	R	I	A	N	L
K	I	H	T	F	D	D	C	A	C	B	P	W	Z	X

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Atwick	Chadwick	Pickwick	Wicket
Bailiwick	Eastwick	Sedgwick	Wickham
Brunswick	Hardwick	Warwick	Wicklow
Candlewick	Kennewick	Wicker	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		÷		2
×		×		−	
	+		+		7
−		+		×	
	÷		+		6
15		17		25	

1 2 4 5 6 7 8 9 9

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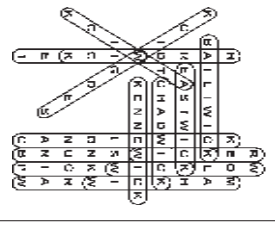
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

	25		17		15
6	5	+	9	÷	9
	×		+		−
7	2	+	1	+	4
	−		×		×
2	7	÷	8	+	6

Fun games to keep minds sharp in 2012

I resolve to build a better brain in 2012. If you're like me, the "think tank" can always use a little exercise, and it's easier and definitely more fun to keep a resolution when you share the challenge with friends and family. That's where games come in.

Here are a couple of fun brain games to put smiles on faces and help everyone in the family keep their mind sharp.

TAKE TWO!

When you don't have time for a standard Scrabble board game, try this speedy version that uses the letter tiles without the board. My daughter taught it to us years ago, and our family is still hooked!

Here's how:

Turn all the Scrabble tiles upside down in the center of the table. Each player takes seven tiles, turns them over and quickly creates words in his own crossword arrangement in front of him. Each word must connect with another, as it would on a Scrabble board. As soon as one of the players has used all seven tiles to form his words, he shouts, "Take 2."

Each player now draws two more tiles and attempts to work them into their arrangements. Continue this fast-paced play with each player drawing two tiles when someone shouts, "2." As the game progresses, players may rearrange their words as they work in the new letters.

When all tiles are gone from the center, the game proceeds until one player has used up all of his letters. Count individual scores by adding up the points printed on each of the letters for all words formed. Deduct points for tiles not used. Highest score wins.

I-SPY MEMORY GAME

Pull out your kitchen junk drawer, gather family members around and say, "Ready, Set, Go!" Quietly study the contents for 20 seconds. Hide the drawer, and ask everyone to write a list of items they saw. Designate an amount of time for writing, depending on ages of your kids. When time is up, read off your answers, and the longest list wins. For another round, try other storage areas, such as a tackle box, sewing basket or your desk drawer when kids visit your office.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. To find more of her creative family recipes and activities, visit www.donnasday.com and link to the NEW Donna's Day Facebook fan page. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

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Good Housekeeping

Repair or replace a recurring question in tough times

By ALAN J. HEAVENS
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

When should you repair and when should you replace?

With the economic downturn keeping people in their homes longer and money ever tighter, it is a choice being considered by more homeowners these days.

For example, during winter, when concerns about energy costs mount, many cash-strapped homeowners try to figure out how to reduce the $1,900 per year that the Department of Energy says the typical family spends on utilities.

A new furnace or energy-efficient windows, although both very obvious ways to lower heating costs, may not be in the budget.

In the meantime, caulking around windows and doors doesn't cost that much and can significantly reduce the flow of cold air into the house. Opening the curtains, shades, or blinds on a sunny winter's day can add warmth to a room.

The Home Builders Institute of the National Association of Home Builders suggests a few other inexpensive ways, including applying weather stripping around windows and doors, changing the filter in the furnace, using draft dodgers inside exterior doors, and installing programmable thermostats to control when the furnace goes on and off.

AP

Experts say that if a repair is estimated to cost 50 percent or less than the amount you paid for the item, it was usually better to have it repaired.

After surveying thousands of its readers on the matter, Consumer Reports maintains that if your appliance is eight or more years old, usually it makes sense to buy a new one.

If you have a favorite high-end, older appliance, you may want to repair it. Consider replacing a newer model if it has been repair-prone. But skip any repair that costs more than half the price of a new product, the magazine staff recommends.

The magazine found that its readers sometimes began the repair process but stopped in midstream in frustration. That, too, can be a costly process, because a repair shop will still charge you even if you change your mind and decide to buy a new whatever.

AARP has millions of older members on fixed incomes. It recommends considering the "50 percent rule," which financial experts have long advocated as a gauge when determining the cost-effectiveness of replacement versus repair.

Those experts say that if a repair was estimated to cost 50 percent or less than the amount you paid for the item, it was usually better to have it repaired.

AARP, however, suggests that the 50 percent rule should be based on replacement value, not original purchase price, since many consumer items have dropped in price over the years.

For major items such as automobiles, consumers should first calculate the estimated current market value or resale value instead of the original purchase price.

If your mechanic says the car will cost $6,500 to repair, and its trade-in value after that is $1,000, the choice is obvious. Take the cost of the repair and put it down on a new car.

Always check each and every product you own for a warranty. Conventional wisdom maintains that a product usually starts causing problems the day after the warranty expires, but just in case something is covered, you should know it in advance.

Consumer Reports also recommends that unless you've bought a pricey, high-end model, it might not pay to professionally repair many out-of-warranty products that are more than three years old.

Regular maintenance extends the life of just about anything. When dust and dirt clog furnace filters, the air flow is constricted and the furnace must work harder. A furnace that does not work efficiently will cost you more in energy, and its parts are more likely to wear out quickly.

One of the factors governing the decision to repair or replace is life expectancy of the product.

Most refrigerators last 15 to 19 years. Unless the fridge has been a lemon since the day it came into the house, the newer it is, the more consideration should be given to repairing it.

Freezers, which last 20 years or so, should be given the same consideration.

An important consideration is energy-efficiency, however. Energy Star-rated refrigerators produced after 2001 use 40 percent less energy than those manufactured before that date, and that might have a bearing on your decision.

Saving $100 a year might not be enough to justify spending the kind of money that you would spend for a refrigerator that would meet your family's needs.

In addition, sometimes a new appliance will change the way the rest of the room looks, or alters the layout so much that you'll need to change everything, increasing the expense beyond what you can afford.

It all comes down to what you can afford and what meets your needs, meaning both tests need to be satisfied, not one or the other.

The same applies to windows, which we've just caulked and weather-stripped to help reduce heating and cooling costs.

Questions? E-mail Alan J. Heavens at aheavens@phillynews.com or write him at The Inquirer, Box 8263, Philadelphia PA 19101.

Roof maintenance

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA
KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: The last time I did an inspection of the outside of my house, I noticed a tree branch hanging over the roof gutter. My neighbor let me into his house upstairs to get a better look, and I saw that it was a fairly large branch. I don't think I can reach it safely as there is too much snow and ice around to climb up there. Should I just leave it until spring?—Chet C., Portland, Maine

A: It's up to you, really. If it's too dangerous to remove by yourself, contact a professional tree service and get a written estimate of how much it will cost for them to remove the limb. If the cost is too steep, you have the option of leaving it until the snow and ice thaw and then working with a friend to remove it.

But safety should always be a consideration. Even without snow and ice, the limb could be too heavy to move safely, or electrical wires could be nearby, or you may not have a ladder tall enough to access that part of the roof. Also, if the tree limb caused roof damage and a leak, there's little time to lose to clear the roof and fix the leak before more serious damage occurs. In those cases, the tree service is your best option.

home tip

Ice dams forming along your gutters? Poor insulation or ventilation at the eaves may be your problem. An insulation installer can inspect and recommend a solution.

Send your questions or tips to ask@thisisahammer.com, or write This Is a Hammer, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Hearty Lentil Stew

Coconut adds a sweet touch, and cumin a dash of spice (plus antioxidants), to a dish loaded with heart-healthy fiber.

1 cup lentils, picked through and rinsed
1 can (14- to 14.5-ounce) lower-sodium chicken broth (about 1 3/4 cup)
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 tablespoon cumin seeds
2 shallots, thinly sliced
1/3 cup sweetened shredded coconut
1 large (10-ounce) Yukon gold potato, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch cubes
6 ounces baby spinach
1/4 teaspoon(s) salt

1. In 2-quart saucepan, combine lentils, broth and 1 cup water. Heat to boiling on high. Cover and reduce heat to medium-low; simmer 15 minutes or until tender.

2. Meanwhile, in deep 12-inch skillet, heat oil on medium until hot. Add cumin seeds and cook 15 to 30 seconds or until fragrant, stirring. Add shallots and coconut; cook 3 minutes or until golden brown, stirring occasionally. Stir in potatoes and cook 2 minutes. Carefully pour lentil mixture into skillet; stir to combine. Cover and cook 10 minutes.

3. Stir in spinach and salt. Cook 2 minutes or until spinach is wilted, stirring. Yields: 4 main-dish servings

■ Each serving: About 305 calories, 7g total fat (3g saturated), 0mg cholesterol, 420mg sodium, 47g total carbs, 20g dietary fiber, 17g protein.

For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipefinder/.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Hearty Minestrone

Your guests will welcome a steaming bowl of this vegetable-bean soup on a cold night. It tastes even better reheated, so it's a good choice to prepare in advance.

2 slices bacon, chopped
2 medium carrots, cut into 1/4-inch dice
1 medium onion, cut into 1/4-inch dice
1 large celery stalk, cut into 1/4-inch dice
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 medium (about 1 pound) all-purpose potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch dice
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) chicken broth
1 1/4 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
1 can (19 ounces) white kidney beans, (cannellini), rinsed and drained
1/2 pound green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
1/3 cup small pasta, such as cavatelli, tubettini or ditalini
1 pound Swiss chard, chopped, with tough stems discarded
1/2 pound spinach, tough stems discarded
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated lemon peel
Grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

1. In 6-quart saucepot, cook bacon over medium heat until browned. With slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towels to drain; set aside.

2. To drippings in saucepot, add carrots, onion and celery, and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are browned, about 15 minutes. Add garlic and cook 30 seconds longer.

3. Add potatoes, broth, salt, pepper, thyme and 6 cups water; heat to boiling over high heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 10 minutes.

4. Add kidney beans, green beans and pasta; cook 7 minutes longer. Stir in Swiss chard, spinach and lemon peel; cook 5 minutes longer or until greens are wilted and tender. Stir in bacon. Serve with grated Parmesan if you like.

■ Each serving: About 370 calories, 2g total fat (1g saturated), 2mg cholesterol, 440mg sodium, 17g total carbs, 4g dietary fiber, 5g protein.

For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipefinder/.

Life & Style

Murdoch to pay Jude Law, 36 others for hacking

LONDON (AP)—Rupert Murdoch's media empire apologized and agreed to cash payouts Thursday to 37 people—including a movie star, a soccer player, a top British politician and the son of a serial killer—who were harassed and phone-hacked by his tabloid press.

The four—Jude Law, Ashley Cole, John Prescott and Chris Shipman—were among three dozen victims who received financial damages from Murdoch's British newspaper company for illegal eavesdropping and other intrusions, including email snooping.

Law

Lawyers for the claimants said the settlements vindicated their accusation that senior Murdoch executives had long known about the scale of illegal phone hacking and had tried to cover it up.

News International, the parent company of Murdoch's News Group Newspapers, said it did not admit that senior staff knew of the wrongdoing and tried to cover it up—but it said that "for the purpose of reaching these settlements only, News Group Newspapers agreed that the damages to be paid to claimants should be assessed as if this was the case."

Financial details of 15 of the payouts, totaling more than 640,000 pounds (about $1 million), were made public at a court hearing Thursday. The amounts generally ran into the tens of thousands of pounds—although Law received 130,000 pounds (about $200,000), plus legal costs, to settle claims against the now-shuttered News of the World tabloid and its sister tabloid, The Sun.

Law was one of 60 people who have sued News Group Newspapers, claiming their mobile phone voicemails were hacked. Others whose settlements were announced Thursday at London's High Court included former government ministers Chris Bryant and Tessa Jowell, rugby player Gavin Henson, Princess Diana's former lover James Hewitt, singer Dannii Minogue and Sara Payne, the mother of a murdered girl.

It was the largest group of settlements announced yet in the long-running hacking scandal, which has shaken Murdoch's global empire, spurred the resignations of several of his top executives and reverberated through Britain's political, police and media elite.

Law, the star of "Sherlock Holmes" and "The Talented Mr. Ripley," said he was "truly appalled" at the scale of surveillance and privacy invasion that his case had exposed.

"No aspect of my private life was safe from intrusion by News Group Newspapers, including the lives of my children and the people who work for me," he said in a statement. "It was not just that my phone messages were listened to. News Group also paid people to watch me and my house for days at a time and to follow me and those close to me, both in this country and abroad."

News Group Newspapers admitted that 16 articles about Law published in the News of the World between 2003 and 2006 had been obtained by phone hacking, and that the actor had also been placed under "repeated and sustained physical surveillance." The company also admitted that articles in The Sun had misused Law's private information—although it didn't go as far as to admit hacking by that paper.

Law said Murdoch's tabloids had been "prepared to do anything to sell their newspapers and to make money, irrespective of the impact it had on people's lives."

"I changed my phones, I had my house swept for bugs but still the information kept being published," Law said. "I started to become distrustful of people close to me."

The slew of settlements is one consequence of the revelations of phone-hacking and other illegal tactics at the News of the World, where journalists routinely intercepted voicemails of those in the public eye in a relentless search for scoops.

Murdoch closed the 168-year-old paper in July amid a wave of public revulsion over its hacking of the voicemails of missing 13-year-old Milly Dowler, who was later found murdered. More than a dozen ex-Murdoch employees have been arrested by police investigating phone hacking and bribery.

British politicians and police have also been ensnared in the scandal, which exposed the cozy relationship between senior officers, top lawmakers and Murdoch newspaper executives. A government-commissioned inquiry set up in the wake of the scandal is currently investigating the ethics of Britain's media and its links to police and politicians.

Law's ex-wife and actress Sadie Frost received 50,000 pounds (about $77,000) in damages for phone hacking and deceit by the News of the World. Bryant received 30,000 pounds (about $46,000), while Prescott—a prominent member of the Labour Party who was Britain's former deputy prime minister—accepted 40,000 pounds (about $62,000).

After each statement, News Group lawyer Michael Silverleaf stood to express the news company's "sincere apologies" for the damage and distress its illegal activity had caused.

Many of the statements ended with victims saying they felt vindicated after years in which Murdoch's company denied phone hacking had been widespread at the News of the World. The company had initially vowed to fight the claims in court.

"Today's court decision at long last brings clarity, apology and compensation for the years of hacking into my telephone messages by Rupert Murdoch's News Group Newspapers," Prescott told his local newspaper, the Hull Daily Mail. "It follows years of aggressive denials and a cavalier approach to private information and the law."

In a statement, the claimants' lawyers said that "News Group has agreed to compensation being assessed on the basis that senior employees and directors ... knew about the wrongdoing and sought to conceal it by deliberately deceiving investigators and destroying evidence."

The claimants described feeling mistrust, fear and paranoia as phone messages went missing, journalists knew their movements in advance or private information appeared in the media.

Frost said the paper's activity had caused her and Law to suspect one another. Henson said he accused the family of his then-wife, singer Charlotte Church, of leaking stories to the press.

Other claimants included Guy Pelly, a friend of Prince William who was awarded 40,000 pounds (about $62,000), and Tom Rowland, a journalist who wrote for one of Murdoch's own newspapers, the Sunday Times. He received 25,000 pounds ($39,000) after News Group admitted hacking his phone.

Trial set for man accused of killing Hudson family

CHICAGO (AP)—A judge on Thursday ordered a man charged in the 2008 Chicago slayings of Jennifer Hudson's mother and two other family members to stand trial in April, despite the objections of his attorney, who said she was not ready.

After listening to William Balfour's attorney say she's still building her case, a clearly exasperated Cook County Judge William Charles Burns said it didn't appear she was making any progress and set a date.

Burns, who suggested he wanted to start the trial next month, instead ordered jury selection to start April 9 and testimony to begin April 23. He said he expected the trial to last about three or four weeks.

Amy Thompson, a deputy public defender, said despite working 12 to 14 hours a day on the case, she could not answer that she was ready for trial, as prosecutors had done.

"We're not prepared for trial at this time," she said.

Balfour, 30, is the estranged husband of Hudson's sister, Julia Hudson. He is charged with first-degree murder in the October 2008 slayings of the Hudson sisters' mother, Darnell Donerson, their brother, Jason Hudson, and Julia Hudson's 7-year-old son, Julian King.

Prosecutors allege that Balfour, using a gun he stole from Jason Hudson, shot the three in a jealous rage because he was angry that Julia Hudson had been dating another man. He is accused of shooting Donerson and Jason Hudson in their South Side home, and then grabbing the boy and shooting him inside Jason Hudson's SUV. The boy's body was found three days later in the vehicle on the city's West Side.

In 2008, Balfour's attorney at the time said that there was no fingerprint, blood or other forensic evidence linking Balfour to the slayings. But prosecutors have said there is evidence linking Balfour to the slayings of the Oscar winner's family members, including gunshot residue on the steering wheel of his car. They also have said detectives have disproven some statements Balfour made to them.

Thompson left quickly after Thursday's hearing and did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

At Thursday's hearing, Assistant State's Attorney James McKay objected to a defense motion to turn over Jennifer Hudson's home address and telephone numbers to Balfour's attorneys out of concern for her privacy. He did agree to make Hudson available to defense attorneys to be interviewed.

Hamas bans singing competition in Gaza

JERUSALEM (AP)—Organizers of the Palestinian version of "American Idol" said Thursday the Gaza Strip's Hamas rulers have banned residents from participating in the popular reality show.

The organizers said Hamas told them the program is "indecent," in what appears to be a new attempt by the fundamentalist militant Muslim group to crack down on behavior it sees as contrary to its conservative interpretation of Islam.

In the past, Hamas has banned women from riding on the backs of motorbikes, women from smoking water pipes, and men from working in hair salons—saying such practices were immodest. Not all bans are imposed uniformly.

The ban on competing in New Star came around the same time that Hamas police beat up members of Gaza's tiny Shiite minority while they tried to hold a religious ceremony.

Alaa al-Abed, the chief producer of the "New Star" program, said the edict would prevent Gaza's 12 contestants from competing in the upcoming second round of the competition Thursday night. It will be broadcast next month. He said he was informed of the decision last Saturday.

"This is more serious than Hamas just killing fun in Gaza—they are limiting the freedoms of the people, according to their whims," al-Abed said.

There was no official comment from Hamas.

CELEBRITY EXTRA

By CINDY ELAVSKY
KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: I was watching an old episode of "Dexter" from season one and was thrilled to see Tony Goldwyn as a guest star that episode. What has he been doing lately? I know he's done a lot of behind-the-scenes work, but I'd love to see his handsome face on screen soon.—Ginger F., Madison, Wisc.

Tony Goldwyn

A: Well, you won't have to wait too long, Ginger, because Tony is one of the stars of the new ABC drama "Scandal." The show centers on Olivia Pope (played by Kerry Washington), a former communications director to the president of the United States (Tony Goldwyn), who left the White House to open her own prominent crisis-management firm. She's hoping to start a new chapter in her life—both professionally and personally—but she can't seem to completely cut ties with her past. "Scandal" premieres Thursday, April 5, at 10 p.m. ET. With the show's creator and executive producer being Shonda Rhimes, who also is behind the powerhouse series "Grey's Anatomy," you can bet there will be plenty of edge-of-your-seat drama to keep you coming back each week.

■ ■ ■

Q: I know you've mentioned this before, and every now and then I hear teases about it, but are they ever going to make a "24" movie?—Gerry D., via e-mail

A: Jack Bauer himself, Kiefer Sutherland, told reporters at a Television Critics Association press event about the planned movie: "Hopefully we'll begin shooting at the end of April, beginning of May." So, while that's about all the details anyone can offer at this point, at least it's something, and if we cross our fingers, maybe this movie will see the light of day by fall 2012 or early 2013.

■ ■ ■

Q: Are the rumors of a Van Halen reunion true? If so, is it with David Lee Roth or Sammy Hagar as the frontman?—Steve V., Akron, Ohio

A: Those rumors are not rumors, Steve. They are cold, hard facts: Van Halen, with David Lee Roth, is back with a new album and upcoming tour. The album is called "A Different Kind of Truth" and will be released Feb. 7, with the debut single, "Tattoo" already getting airplay. The band starts touring Feb. 18, so check online to see when they are coming to your town. Hopefully they'll stay friendly with each other long enough to complete the tour this time.

■ ■ ■

Q: Will "Top Shot" be back for another season?—Jeremy W., via e-mail

A: The History Channel recently announced that its top-rated competition series hosted by Colby Donaldson will be back for a fourth season starting Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 10 p.m. ET. The show promises more twists and history-inspired challenges than ever before. Unless your lady is into the show, I'd suggest taking her out to dinner for Valentine's Day and DVRing the show to watch once she's gone to sleep.

Write to Cindy at King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475; or e-mail her at letters@cindyelavsky.com.

Oprah's guards scuffle with Indian media

U.S. talk show host Oprah Winfrey poses at the Taj Mahal in Agra, India, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012.
AP

NEW DELHI (AP)—Indian police briefly detained three of Oprah Winfrey's bodyguards after they scuffled with local TV journalists Thursday, a news agency reported.

The American talk-show host had been traveling with both American and Indian bodyguards while visiting the Hindu pilgrimage town of Mathura, about 90 miles (145 kilometers) south of Delhi.

Press Trust of India said police detained three of the guards after local journalists said their video equipment had been damaged in a brawl. No one was reported hurt, and there was no indication that the American bodyguards were involved.

The three guards were released after apologizing in a letter to the journalists, PTI said.

It is Winfrey's first trip to India, where she has been filming her new show "Oprah's Next Chapter."

Earlier this week, she delighted Mumbai locals by wearing a bright orange sari while meeting with Bollywood stars including Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan and Aishwarya Rai at a private party.

She also visited the Taj Mahal on Thursday, and she is due to attend the Jaipur Literature Festival that begins Friday.

Michelle Obama heading to Leno's 'Tonight Show'

BURBANK, Calif. (AP)—First lady Michelle Obama is headed to Jay Leno's stage later this month.

NBC announced Thursday that the first lady will appear on "The Tonight Show" on Jan. 31, where she's expected to talk about life in the White House, her fitness initiative for children and her upcoming book about the White House kitchen garden.

She was a guest on the program in 2008 when her husband was a candidate and also appeared via satellite hookup from the White House on "The Jay Leno Show" in 2009, the host's perch before returning to "The Tonight Show."

Rihanna, Coldplay to perform together at Grammy Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—Rihanna and Coldplay sing together on the group's latest album, and they'll do so again at next month's Grammy Awards.

Rihanna, who is nominated for four Grammys including album of the year for "Loud," tweeted the news to her followers Wednesday night, calling it "BONKERS."

Coldplay is up for three awards.

Paul McCartney was announced Thursday by The Recording Academy as another performer on the Feb. 12 broadcast.

McCartney is being honored during Grammy week as the MusiCares person of the year. His new album, "Kisses on the Bottom," will be released Feb. 7.

LL Cool J will host the show, to be broadcast on CBS from the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Other performers include the Foo Fighters, Taylor Swift, Bruno Mars and Jason Aldean.

'30 Rock' episode mocks its own star's gay dilemma

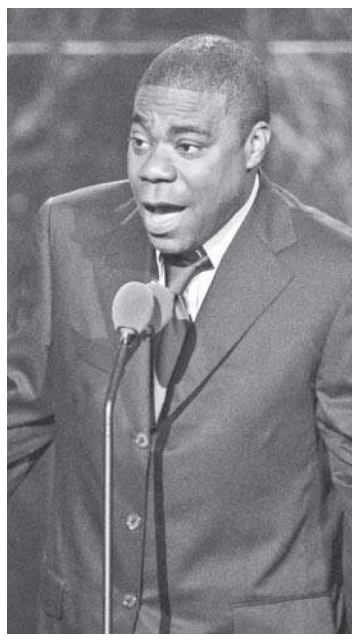
NEW YORK (AP)—NBC comedy "30 Rock" has mocked one of its own cast members.

The show often finds laughs in real-life events in the show business world it inhabits. Thursday's edition focused on Tracy Morgan, who found himself in real-life hot water last June after making anti-gay remarks during a stand-up appearance in Nashville, Tenn.

On the "30 Rock" episode, Morgan character Tracy Jordan sparked a protest after making a couple of ridiculous gay-oriented jokes during a concert date.

His boss was forced to apologize for him. The Tina Fey character explained to the media he's incapable of hate against any group—he's just an idiot.

In real life, Morgan publicly apologized to gay advocacy groups shortly after his rant.



In this March 26, 2011 file photo, actor and comedian Tracy Morgan appears onstage at the "The Comedy Awards" presented by Comedy Central in New York.
AP

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Man pleads no contest to stalking Halle Berry

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A man accused of scaling the fence of Halle Berry's house will remain in jail after pleading no contest to stalking the Oscar-winning actress. Deputy District Attorney Wendy Segall says Richard A. Franco was sentenced to serve 386 days in county jail Thursday, but he has already served half the term. The 28-year-old was also placed on five years' probation, a year of psychological counseling and ordered to stay away from the actress for the next decade. Franco was arrested outside Berry's home in July after repeatedly coming onto her property. In one instance, the actress stated in a sworn declaration that Franco attempted to enter her kitchen, but she was able to lock the door before he got inside. A burglary charge filed against Franco was dropped.

Dolly Parton plans water-snow park in Tenn.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Dolly Parton plans a water-snow park in Nashville to join her other tourist attractions in Tennessee. The $50 million venture, announced Thursday, is a 114-acre park projected to open as early as summer 2014. It is not yet named. It will join her Dollywood theme park and a water park about 190 miles away in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains. The venture will be a partnership with Gaylord Entertainment, which owns the sprawling Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center and the Grand Ole Opry country music show in Nashville. The park is projected to have 500,000 visitors in its first full season. Colin V. Reed, chairman and CEO of Gaylord Entertainment, says the park will host special winter festivities and music. Further details about the project were not announced.

GLAAD Media Award nominees announced

NEW YORK (AP)—GLAAD has named the film "J. Edgar," Lady Gaga's album "Born This Way," and a TV interview by David Letterman with Chaz Bono among its nominees for the 23rd Annual GLAAD Media Awards. The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation announced on Thursday 116 nominees in English-language categories and 35 nominees in Spanish-language categories. Other nominees include the film "Albert Nobbs," starring Glenn Close, and the TV series "Glee," "Modern Family" and "NCIS," as well as the wedding of a gay staffer aired on the talk show "Conan." The awards are meant to recognize and honor media for outstanding images of the gay and lesbian community. The winners will be announced March 24 at the Marriott Marquis in Times Square and at ceremonies in April and June.

Walls are poor conductors for casual conversations

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: What do you think about people who attempt to converse with you from another room? My boyfriend does it fairly often. He may be on the computer while I'm reading or watching TV, and he'll yell out a question or tell me something. Most of the time I answer him, but then he'll continue the conversation—all from the other room.

I find it rude, and to be quite honest, disrespectful. I also think it makes no sense because with the TV on it's difficult to hear him. If I want to speak to someone in another room, I get off my "keester" and go directly to him or her. That's common sense. My former roommate used to do the same thing. Do you think this is a "guy thing"?

CAN'T HEAR IN NEW YORK

DEAR CAN'T HEAR: Nope. It's just lazy. And it continues because you allow it. Tell your boyfriend that if he has something he wants to say to you, he should come and say it. Point out that you give him that respect. And if he "forgets," stay put and don't answer from the other room.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend with whom I exchange birthday and Christmas gifts. I make a great deal of effort to find things I know she would like, and I have been quite successful. My friend, however, buys me things I suspect she would like for herself.

Example: I'm always hot while she's always chilly. She bought me heavy pajamas and a warm robe for Christmas. I don't like spicy food—she does. She gave me two large containers of seasoning containing chili pepper. I love to read fiction while she prefers nonfiction. For my birthday I received a book about history.

This kind of exchange has been going on for years, and I don't remember receiving one gift I could really use. What can I say to her?

PEEVED IN PITTSBURGH

DEAR PEEVED: To say something would be rude. I do have a suggestion, however. On the next gift-giving occasion, give your friend some things YOU would like. Example: A pretty fan to accessorize a summer dress, a jar of your favorite jam, a novel or two you would enjoy reading—and then you can agree on a gift exchange. Problem solved.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a 2-year-old son, "Seth." His father, "Ray," and I went our separate ways during my pregnancy. He came to see Seth a few times when he was a couple of months old and promised he'd continue, but he didn't follow through. Ray has married since then, and hasn't called to ask about his son. I don't call him either.

He didn't show up for court and the DNA test, so the judge ordered him to pay child support by default, which he has been doing. I don't believe in forcing a man to be a father, and I would never make my son visit him. It is obvious Ray has no interest in his child. I contacted the grandparents and they are just as cold. What do I tell Seth when he asks about his father?

SOLE PARENT IN ALABAMA

DEAR SOLE PARENT: Tell him the truth. Explain that when he was born, Ray wasn't ready to accept the responsibilities that go along with being a dad—and that as time has passed, Ray has been unwilling to step forward. As sad as that may be, it would be worse to give your son false information or false hope that his biological father will ever be willing to give him more than the court ordered him to.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $12 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

WOO-HOO!
I FINALLY GOT THE KNOT OUT OF MY SHOELACE!
THAT WAS A DAY WELL SPENT
Distributed by Universal Uclick www.facebook.com/garfield
JIM DAVIS 1-21
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Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

DAD, CAN WE GO TO THE SUPER BOWL?
HA! THE TICKETS ARE LIKE $1,000 EACH.
SO...
SO... I DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF CASH. DO YOU?
MAYBE WE COULD SELL SOMETHING?
OKAY, THOUGH THE FOLLOWING ARE OFF LIMITS: SIBLINGS, CARS, HOUSE...
WHAT!? THAT'S ALL THE VALUABLE STUFF!
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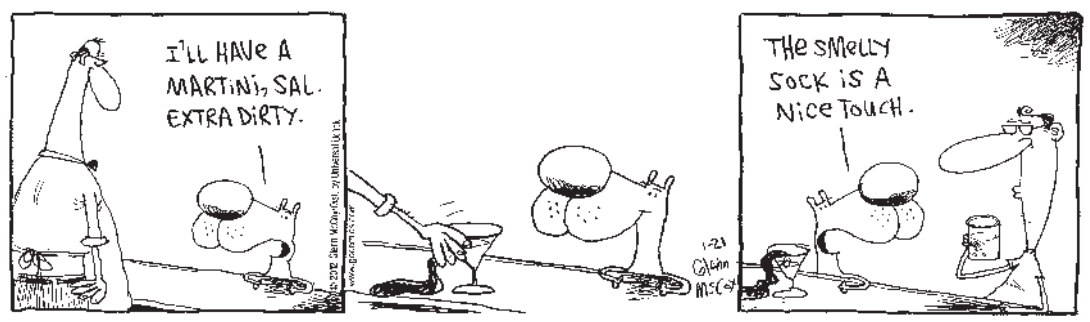
The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

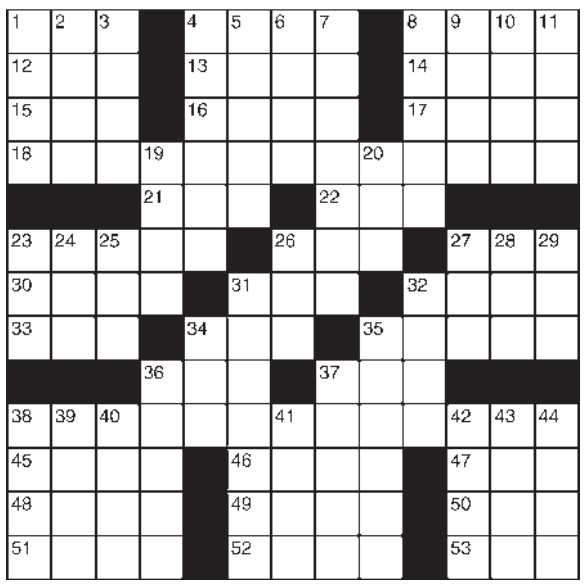
ACROSS
1 Bake-sale org.
4 "Mayday!"
8 Basketball team
12 Predetermine the outcome
13 Elliptical
14 Largest of the seven
15 "— the fields we go"
16 Carte
17 Condo, e.g.
18 Green insect
21 Elev.
22 Support of a sort
23 Tom's prey
26 Lustrous black
27 Dandy
30 Eager, and then some
31 Scratch
32 Color quality
33 Navigation aid
34 Manhandle
35 Virago
36 Cranberry territory
37 Mimic
38 Sport venues
45 Family member
46 Ms. Brockovich
47 Ill temper
48 Genealogy chart
49 Grow weary
50 Kvetch
51 Chops
52 Undo a dele
53 Seesaw quorum

DOWN
1 Item on stage
2 Layer
3 Taj Mahal city
4 Sermon
5 Occurrence
6 Singer k.d.
7 One whose work can be draining
8 Animal life
9 "— It Romantic?"
10 Henry —
11 Food
19 Half-fathom
20 Illustrations
23 Predicament
24 A Gabor sister
25 Wardrobe malfunction
26 Leno's prominence
27 Supporting
28 Inseparable
29 Parishioner's seat
31 Attractive items
32 You
34 Luau side dish
35 Small piano
36 Information measures
37 Burning
38 Maze option
39 Entice
40 Over again
41 Unyielding courage
42 Scourge of serge
43 Showdown directive
44 Lily variety

Solution time: 27 mins.

N	O	V	■	R	A	D	■	G	A	U	Z	E
A	L	I	■	E	V	E	■	W	I	Z	E	N
I	D	O	■	V	A	L	K	Y	R	I	E	S
A	I	L	■	S	T	A	I	N	■	■	■	■
D	E	A	D	■	A	Y	E	■	E	D	G	E
■	■	■	E	A	R	■	V	A	L	I	U	M
A	T	A	L	L	■	■	B	A	N	T	U	■
V	A	L	L	E	Y	■	M	A	N	■	■	■
E	G	G	S	■	U	S	A	■	D	A	U	B
■	■	■	G	R	U	N	T	■	D	N	A	■
V	A	L	E	N	T	I	N	E	■	O	I	L
A	R	E	N	A	■	T	E	A	■	R	O	E
S	K	E	E	T	■	E	R	R	■	E	N	D

Yesterday's answer 1-21



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Booboo Stewart, 18; Izabella Miko, 31; Emma Bunton, 36; Geena Davis, 56.

Happy Birthday: You will pack a big punch if you focus on what's important to you. You'll have the wherewithal to make things happen and get your way using discipline and persuasion to excel. Power is the goal, and the strategy you use will result in obtaining the position that will enable you to be a leader. Your numbers are 2, 8, 15, 23, 27, 34, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You may like it when everything moves quickly, but for now you should bide your time. Trying to force something or someone to act will end up taking longer and add complications to the situation you face. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Speak up, talk to people, get a feel for their overall opinion and you will know precisely what to do and say in order to grab attention. Force, responsible suggestions and actions will result in a leadership position. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Take care of financial or medical business. Look over your personal papers and decide what you can afford to do and what you cannot. Contact someone in a position to help you make the right choice. Knowledge is your best resource. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Live life. You owe it to yourself and whoever you are with to maintain a positive outlook. If you are fun to be with, everyone will want to be by your side. No doom and gloom when you should be sharing and caring. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Uncertainty will lead to too much of everything. Before you indulge mentally, physically emotionally or financially, consider retracing your steps and looking for an alternate route. Simplicity and moderation are key to your success and happiness. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Play to win. The more you put into whatever you pursue, the less interference you will face. Show confidence to avoid being faced with criticism or complaints. Romance should be planned for the evening hours. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Listen and consider options, but most of all, avoid controversy and emotional conversations based on inadequacies. It's important to put your effort into something creative or unique that will take your mind off worries and ease stress. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): A partnership can help you advance. Discuss your ideas and intentions for a project you have yet to finish. A little creative input, and perhaps joining forces with someone who can compliment what you have to offer, will lead to success. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You'll be looking for adventure, but think again before you take an unnecessary risk. You are likely to be faced with a perilous situation and should consider avoiding any scenario that can lead to injury or abuse. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You will be emotional about your current personal state. Do whatever needs to be done to make things work to your advantage. Make a promise that will help keep you in front of any competition you face. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Discipline will lead to success. Contracts, agreements and taking an original approach to what needs to be done will help you make the changes necessary to improve your situation. Re-evaluate the past and get rid of any negativity. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Size up your situation and reconsider what you have to offer. Something you used to do will be easy to market, fulfilling to resurrect and helpful in raising your income. Love is in the stars, and sharing your thoughts will get the ball rolling. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are powerful, intent on getting your way and proactive in your pursuits.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

6	1			2	7		3	1
		8	1			6		
3	6			4		4		6
		2					5	
		1			8	2		
7			4					3
	5			3			8	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

3	5	2	8	1	6	9	7	4
7	1	4	2	5	9	6	3	8
9	6	8	3	7	4	1	5	2
4	8	3	6	2	7	5	9	1
5	9	1	4	8	3	7	2	6
2	7	6	5	9	1	4	8	3
6	2	5	9	4	8	3	1	7
8	4	7	1	3	5	2	6	9
1	3	9	7	6	2	8	4	5

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/21

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

COOKING PHEASANT — **Solution: 8 letters**

B	W	B	A	C	O	N	B	C	G	R	R	Y	A	E
R	C	I	L	R	A	G	T	O	I	O	M	I	Ⓢ	P
I	H	R	L	Y	S	I	L	N	I	O	O	E	Ⓞ	O
N	O	D	E	D	T	D	G	N	N	H	M	D	Ⓤ	U
E	P	P	I	M	E	N	F	O	S	A	L	T	Ⓟ	R
N	M	C	O	N	E	N	R	I	I	W	A	T	E	R
I	A	U	O	C	N	T	D	S	R	E	E	V	E	S
W	S	P	K	L	S	E	A	S	D	E	L	R	M	T
E	C	I	O	A	C	N	R	E	R	I	B	O	Y	Y
N	U	R	G	G	G	H	T	U	S	E	K	A	D	L
I	T	D	I	U	A	S	I	R	S	I	T	I	C	E
S	S	A	I	M	A	R	O	C	N	A	C	T	G	K
I	T	N	S	O	S	V	T	G	U	E	T	O	U	A
U	E	A	R	T	A	O	R	I	N	S	E	Y	O	B
C	H	E	F	S	E	O	N	I	O	N	P	O	R	K

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Bacon, Bake, Bird, Brine, Butter, Chef, Chop, Colchicus, Connoisseur, Cook, Crimson, Cuisine, Cuts, Dice, Dinner, Dish, Drip, Fats, Fireback, Garlic, Gastronomy, Golden, Good, Impeyan, Lyre, Onion, Pork, Pour, Reeves, Ringneck, Rinse, Roasted, Salt, Sanguine, Satyr, Savor, Siamese, Silver, Smoking, Soup, Style, Taste, Titmouse, Tragopan, Water, Wild, Wine

Yesterday's Answer: Puddles

To order THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD volumes 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 or 31, send $8.95 each (U.S. funds only) plus $3 postage for the first book, $2 per book additional book. Send to WONDERWORD, 1130 Wall St., Kansas City, Mo. 64105 or call toll-free 1-800-642-6480. Order online at puzzles.com

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Phone is different. 2. House is missing. 3. Vest is black. 4. Papers are missing from desk. 5. Book is different. 6. File cabinet is gone.

Wishing Well®

5	4	5	3	6	4	7	4	5	2	6	7	3
I	N	D	H	H	E	G	W	E	L	E	O	A
5	8	7	8	4	2	5	4	5	7	2	5	8
A	L	A	O	S	O	S	U	A	L	O	R	O
7	5	7	2	4	2	5	6	4	3	2	5	8
S	E	N	K	C	A	E	L	C	R	H	X	K
3	7	5	7	6	5	8	3	2	5	7	8	2
M	O	C	T	P	H	F	O	E	A	A	O	A
4	3	4	2	5	7	8	5	4	6	5	7	8
E	N	S	D	N	L	R	G	S	I	E	T	W
3	7	4	7	8	5	8	3	7	3	8	7	6
Y	E	D	R	A	D	R	A	E	T	D	D	S
4	3	4	6	4	3	4	6	3	4	6	3	6
A	H	W	N	N	O	E	E	M	D	A	E	R

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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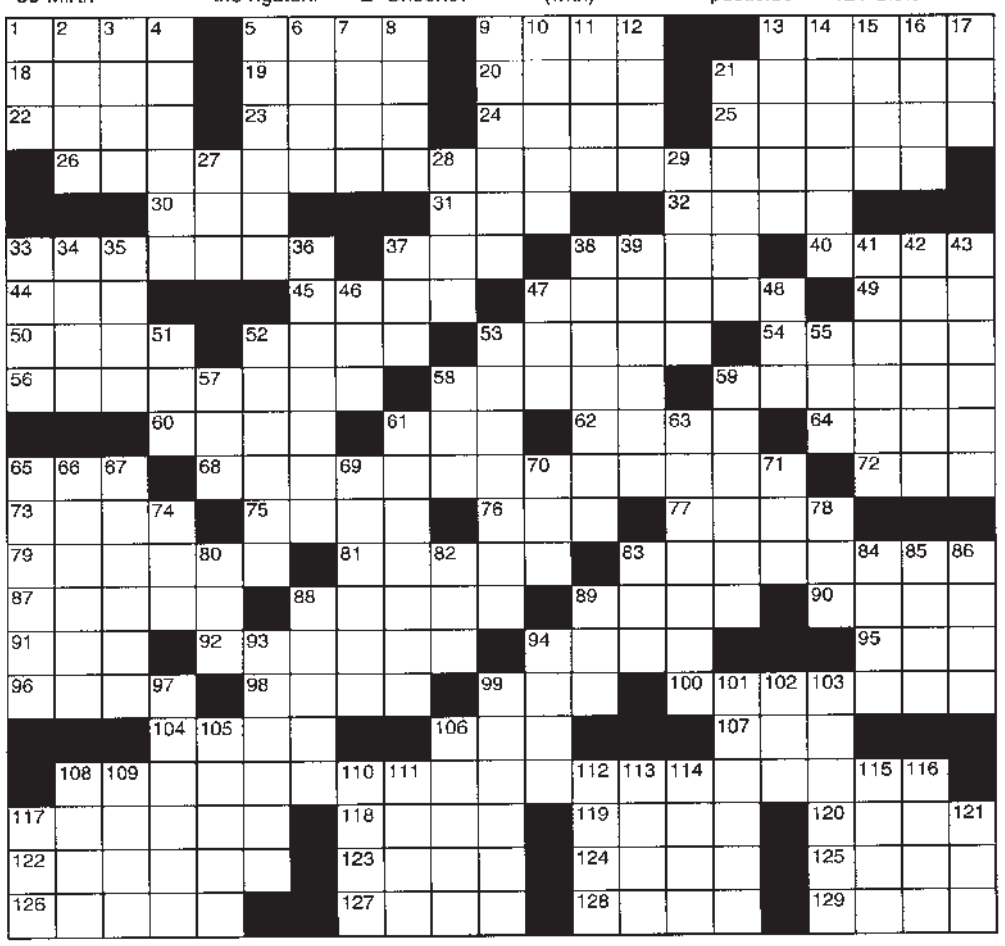
Super Crossword — CLONES

ACROSS
1 News bit
5 Billboard
9 Request an encore
13 Flying Pan?
18 Praise passionately
19 Singer Guthrie
20 Top-notch
21 Pit
22 "— It Up" ('73 hit)
23 A roaring success?
24 Nary a soul
25 Actress Andress
26 Start of a remark by Laurence J. Peter
30 Unfashionable
31 Castilian cry
32 "— and shine!"
33 Part 2 of remark
37 "Golden Girl" McClanahan
38 Read quickly
40 Spellbound
44 Generation
45 McGregor of "Trainspotting"
47 Company
49 Hot off the press
50 Mirth
52 Tennis legend
53 Kanga's creator
54 Crafter's need
56 Anderson's "Tea and —"
58 Shucks
59 "Beagle" passenger
60 — Spumante
61 Lout
62 "State Fair" state
64 Etta of the comics
65 Commercials
68 Part 3 of remark
72 Actor Fernando
73 Learning method
75 Grant or Elwes
76 Youngster
77 Emulated Pinocchio
79 Winter wear
81 Milo of "Ulysses"
83 Malamutes and huskies
87 Poe crow
88 More owlish
89 Coat material
90 Singer Amos
91 Relished the rigatoni
92 Ullman or Gold
94 Flicka's foot
95 Chum
96 Harper of "Tender Mercies"
98 Adequate
99 Understanding
100 Part 4 of remark
104 Lug
106 Actress Zadora
107 TV's "Have — Will Travel"
108 End of remark
117 Infantry action
118 Cheeseboard choice
119 Landed
120 Bearing
122 Like Corn Belt soil
123 Congenial
124 — list
125 Beige
126 "The Threepenny Opera" star
127 Antlered animal
128 Out-of-this-world org.
129 Meat cut

DOWN
1 April initials
2 "Cheerio!"
3 Sinister
4 Wine variety
5 Greet the general
6 Rainbow goddess
7 Whipped-cream serving
8 Hendryx or Gaye
9 Wicked thing?
10 At large
11 — May Wong
12 Jury member
13 Knitting stitches
14 Less demanding
15 Part of Micronesia
16 Colleague of 101 Down
17 Rug type
21 Like a Vermont village
27 "What?"
28 It may be common
29 Rub out
33 Packs groceries
34 "The — Dachshund" ('66 film)
35 Swarm (with)
36 New York university
37 — Dawn Chong
38 Made mucky
39 Faultfinder
41 Response
42 Clothing category
43 Jacksonian bill
46 Kid's query
47 Hodges of baseball
48 Loser's locale
51 Antipollution grp.
52 Storm
53 Winter wear
55 Joan Van —
57 Lava particles
58 "Bali —"
59 '73 Elton John hit
61 Ancient epic
63 Prosperous
65 Genesis peak
66 Contribute
67 Ranges
69 Beethoven symphony
70 Air safety org.
71 Nugent or Knight
74 Poetic preposition
78 Banned pesticide
80 Picnic pest
82 "Yo!"
83 — Canals
84 Klutz's cry
85 Mardi —
86 Farm feature
88 Rouse
89 Finished first
93 Act like the Earth
94 "— Wave" ('63 hit)
97 Comic Kaye
99 "Trees" poet
101 Author Christie
102 Word with fruit or Stanley
103 Crown covering
105 Florida city
106 Locale
108 Knight time
109 Muscat's nation
110 Be inclined
111 Magnus or McClurg
112 "Laugh-In" name
113 Literary pseudonym
114 Pine for
115 Puerto —
116 Garr of "Mr. Mom"
117 "Silent" president
121 Sister



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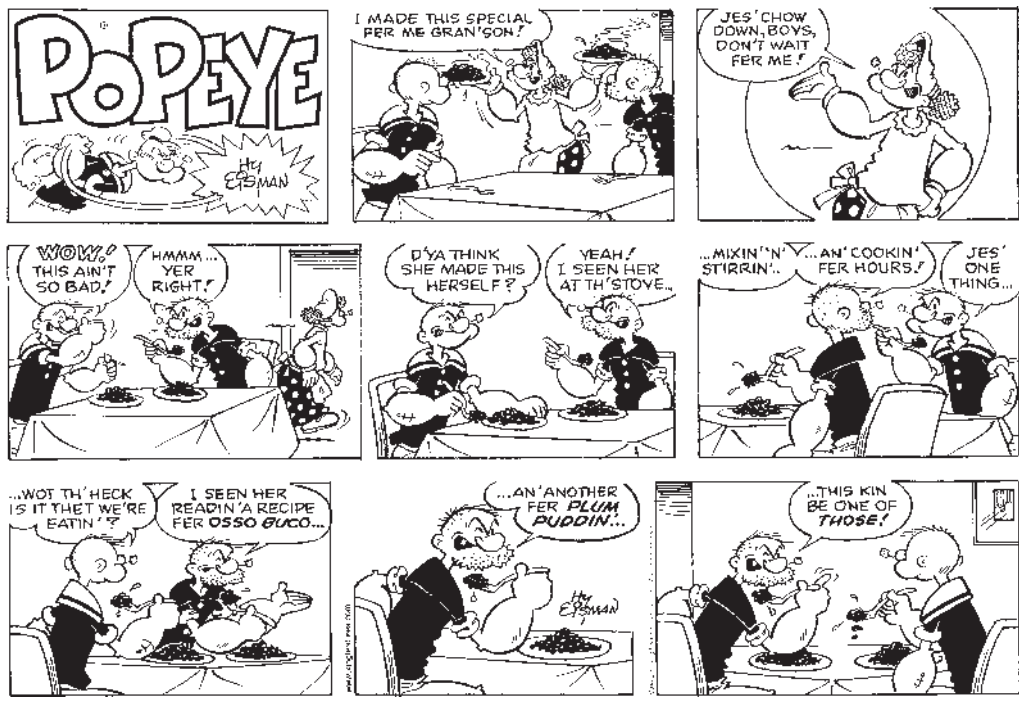
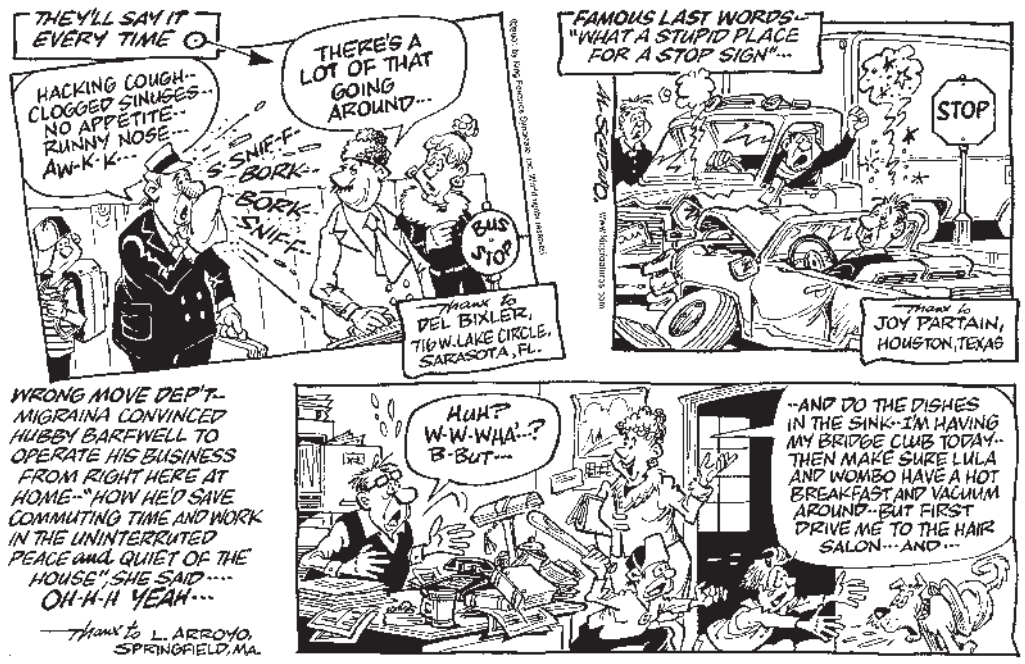
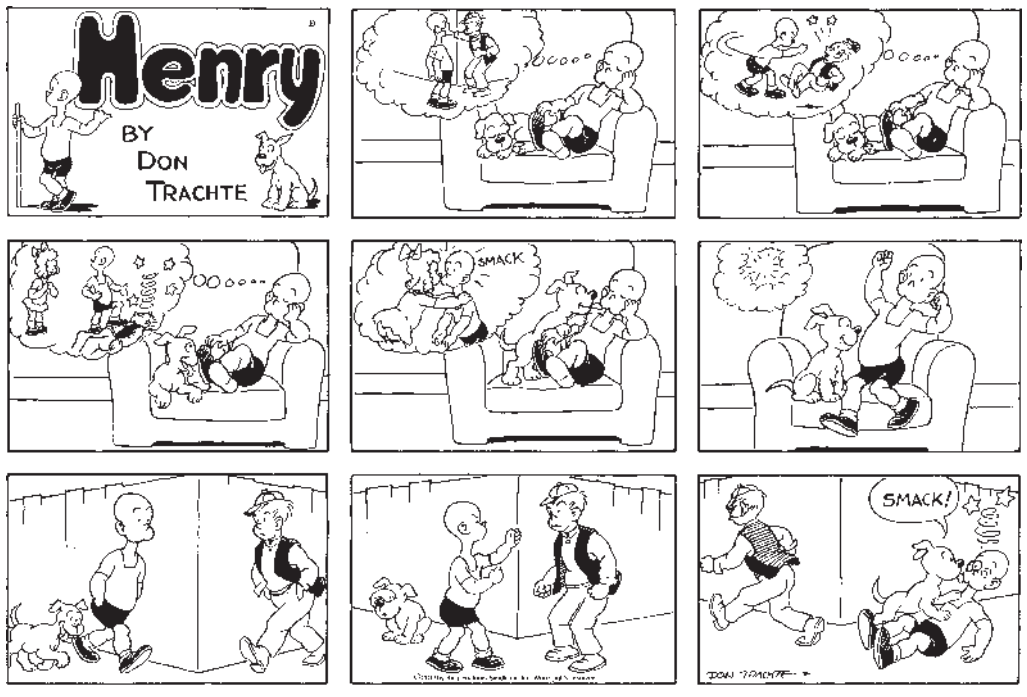

POPEYE
Hy EISMAN
I MADE THIS SPECIAL FER ME GRAN'SON!
JES' CHOW DOWN, BOYS, DON'T WAIT FER ME!
WOW! THIS AIN'T SO BAD!
HMMM... YER RIGHT!
D'YA THINK SHE MADE THIS HERSELF?
YEAH! I SEEN HER AT TH' STOVE...
...MIXIN' 'N' STIRRIN'...
...AN' COOKIN' FER HOURS!
JES' ONE THING...
...WOT TH' HECK IS IT THET WE'RE EATIN'?
I SEEN HER READIN' A RECIPE FER OSSO BUCO...
...AN' ANOTHER FER PLUM PUDDIN'...
...THIS KIN BE ONE OF THOSE!

They'll Do It Every Time — by Al Scaduto


THEY'LL SAY IT EVERY TIME
HACKING COUGH-- CLOGGED SINUSES-- NO APPETITE-- RUNNY NOSE-- AW-K-K...
THERE'S A LOT OF THAT GOING AROUND...
S-SNIF-F-
BORK--
BORK-
SNIFF-
BUS STOP
Thanx to DEL BIXLER, 716 W. LAKE CIRCLE, SARASOTA, FL.
FAMOUS LAST WORDS-- "WHAT A STUPID PLACE FOR A STOP SIGN"...
STOP
Thanx to JOY PARTAIN, HOUSTON, TEXAS
WRONG MOVE DEP'T-- MIGRAINA CONVINCED HUBBY BARFWELL TO OPERATE HIS BUSINESS FROM RIGHT HERE AT HOME--"HOW HE'D SAVE COMMUTING TIME AND WORK IN THE UNINTERRUTED PEACE and QUIET OF THE HOUSE", SHE SAID.... OH-H-H YEAH...
Thanx to L. ARROYO, SPRINGFIELD, MA.
HUH? W-W-WHA'--? B-BUT---
--AND DO THE DISHES IN THE SINK--I'M HAVING MY BRIDGE CLUB TODAY-- THEN MAKE SURE LULA AND WOMBO HAVE A HOT BREAKFAST AND VACUUM AROUND--BUT FIRST DRIVE ME TO THE HAIR SALON... AND...



Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. SPACE: What did the Apollo 11 mission accomplish?
2. MOVIES: What literary character is featured in the movies "Casino Royale" and "Live and Let Die"?
3. HISTORY: In what year was the Magna Carta signed?
4. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president instituted the Good Neighbor policy toward Latin America?
5. PSYCHOLOGY: What abnormal fear is represented by "odontophobia"?
6. TELEVISION: Who played the part of Trapper John McIntyre on "MASH"?
7. LITERATURE: What was the original title of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "This Side of Paradise"?
8. ENTERTAINERS: How old was actress/singer Marilyn Monroe when she died?
9. U.S. STATES: Which state's nickname is the Mountain State?
10. FAMOUS QUOTES: What 20th-century leader once said, "Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment, full effort is full victory"?

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Answers
1. Put the first men on the moon
2. James Bond
3. 1215
4. Franklin Roosevelt
5. A fear of teeth
6. Wayne Rogers
7. "The Romantic Egotist"
8. 36
9. West Virginia
10. Mohandas Gandhi

Saturday's Answers

The Spats — by Jeff Pickering

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

value cost price rate

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Orlean Pacific Plaza Ste. 104 Tamuning, Guam 96913
Tel: (671) 649-WISH • Fax: (671) 646-6293
Email: mawfguam@ite.net • www.wish.org
Office Hours: 8:30am-5:30pm, M-F daily
Saipan Tribune

EMPLOYMENT

(2) Diesel Mechanic
$6.00-$7.00/hr Contact
Cristy at tel# 989-6192

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Looking for used cars. Year 2003 & up. 4 cylinder, Good condition. We pay cash! Pls. call 287-7676

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GREAT TEAM?

Position: Account Manager

Duties include, but are not limited to planning, coordinating and directing advertising campaigns of our publications.

Requirements:
- At least two (2) years related experience
- Proficient skills in MS Office applications required
- Excellent communication skills (fluent English speaking and writing)
- Must have a valid CNMI Drivers License

Please submit resume in sealed envelope to:
Human Resources Department
2/F Transpac Business Center, Middle Road, Gualo Rai
Saipan MP 96950

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm.

OUR GROUP IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER
****No phone calls please****

Garage Sale

January 21 – 22, 2012

• Generator (small)
• 20′ Container • Chest Freezer
• Bed • Desk
• Chairs • Refrigerator
• Coffee Maker • Bacon Slicer
• Mixer • TV Set
• Cabinet....etc.

Location: China Town Husga Avenue (Behind Gold's Gym) Call: 285-9779

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Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

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Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Right behind NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

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Requires: High School Diploma, GED or equivalent with 2 years experience in passenger or customer service. Assists passengers by answering inquiries regarding flight information/booking/reservations, checking-in out-bound passengers and luggage and assisting them in boarding flights, assisting in-bound passengers through immigration and customs. Must be computer-literate with excellent oral and written communication skills in English. Must be able to lift 70 pounds. Able to work nights, weekends, holidays, varied schedules.

Applications can be obtained at the POI Aviation Office at the Continental Cargo Building at the airport. Salaries will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted not later than January 27, 2012. Back ground checks and pre-employment drug testing will be required prior to employment.

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Even ailing, James leads Heat past Lakers

MIAMI (AP)—LeBron James shook off flu-like symptoms to score 31 points, Chris Bosh scored 15 and the Miami Heat won their second straight, topping the Los Angeles Lakers 98-87 on Thursday night.

Shane Battier scored 11 and Mario Chalmers finished with 10 for Miami. James was sent home from the team's shootaround practice earlier in the day to rest, and finished with eight rebounds and eight assists to go with 12 for 27 shooting.

Pau Gasol scored a season-high 26 for the Lakers, Kobe Bryant scored 24 and Andrew Bynum finished with 15 points and 12 rebounds.

Miami moved to 5-0 this season without Dwyane Wade, who missed his second straight game with a sprained right ankle. He missed three games earlier this season with left foot soreness.

Bryant put together a great late run to attempt a comeback, banking in a 3-pointer and following that seconds later with a steal and transition dunk that got the Lakers within 94-84 with 2 minutes left. But Derek Fisher's 3-point try on the next Los Angeles possession hit the front of the rim, Udonis Haslem controlled the rebound and James made a 15-foot runner to seal the outcome.

It was the first time James had gone against his former coach in Cleveland, Lakers' boss Mike Brown. At the Lakers' shootaround practice Thursday afternoon Brown said he and James had not spoken in advance of this game and didn't know if they would - but James made sure they did, running over to the Los Angeles bench and grabbing his former coach for a long embrace and a few words.

Brown was asked before the game if going against James would bring out sentimental memories of their time in Cleveland together.

"I had a great time coaching LeBron," Brown said. "I wouldn't be in this suit if it wasn't for him."

James showed no signs of illness. In fact, he apparently felt good enough to take on two teams—the Lakers ... and the Miami Marlins. James' momentum carried him over the sideline across from the Lakers' bench in the first half, nearly knocking over none other than Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria, who escaped the collision with the 265-pound two-time MVP unscathed.

Loria spent most of the next few minutes laughing.

Meanwhile, the Lakers had very little to laugh about.

They shot 31 percent in the first half, their lowest output for any half this season. Bryant had as many field goals in the opening 24 minutes (one, on eight shots) as Heat forward Eddy Curry (1 for 1), who got his first NBA action since December 2009 when he checked in late in the first quarter for a 2 1/2-minute stint in which he made a basket, grabbed a rebound, was charged with a turnover and got a pair of loud ovations from a sellout crowd.

Curry returned for another stretch to start the fourth quarter, finishing his night with six points and three rebounds in six minutes. Curry said earlier Thursday that he lost about 65 pounds to get ready for his comeback, more than half of that since the start of Heat training camp in December.

AP

Miami Heat's Eddy Curry (34) attempts a shot as Los Angeles Lakers' Pau Gasol (16) defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game on Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012, in Miami.

"He gave us good minutes, good energy," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said during a televised in-game interview. "He's done a lot to get to this point. We're all very proud of him."

Miami's lead was 52-37 at the half, buoyed by eight 3-pointers—more than the Heat attempted in two December games—and a sizzling defensive start where the Lakers were forced into missing 18 of their first 24 shots. Over a 51-minute stretch going back to late in the first half of Tuesday's game against San Antonio, the Heat had outscored the Spurs and Lakers by a whopping 137-83 margin.

There was no second-half letup, either. James scored nine points and Bosh was 4 for 4 from the floor in the third quarter, and even with the Lakers shooting 56 percent in the period Miami pushed its lead out to 77-56 entering the fourth.

Rockets 90, Hornets 88, OT

In Houston, the hosts survived one of the worst fourth quarters in team history by edging New Orleans in overtime.

Kevin Martin scored 27 of his 32 points in the first half and Samuel Dalembert grabbed a season-high 17 rebounds for the Rockets who led by as much as 14 points and looked to be cruising to a fifth straight win.

However they scored only seven points in the final quarter as the Hornets forced the game to overtime.

Jason Smith scored 17 points and Jarrett Jack and Marco Bellinelli added 15 points apiece for New Orleans, which has olst 12 of 13.

Mavericks 94, Jazz 91

In Salt Lake City, Shawn Marion scored a season-high 22 points, including a late layup, as the Dallas Mavericks defeated the Utah Jazz to snap a two-game losing streak and cool off the league's hottest team.

The Mavs (9-7) were coming off back-to-back last-possession losses to the Lakers and Clippers.

The Jazz (9-5) lost at home for only the second time all season, and second time in 10 games overall.

The Jazz were down by 13 in the second quarter and by 11 in the third before rallying.

Utah led by three early in the fourth after a dunk by C.J. Miles. The game was tied at 87 before Jason Terry hit a 3-pointer, and Marion a layup.

Al Jefferson led Utah with 22 points.

Source: Ryan Braun appeal of positive drug test begins

NEW YORK (AP)—Ryan Braun's appeal of his positive drug test began Thursday before baseball arbitrator Shyam Das.

The start of the National League MVP's appeal, first reported by the New York Daily News, was confirmed by a person familiar with the session who spoke on condition of anonymity because the proceeding was not to be made public.

Calls to Braun's agent, Nez Balelo, and Major League Baseball spokesman Pat Courtney were not returned.

When the positive drug test was first reported by ESPN.com last month, Braun had a spokesman issue a statement saying there were circumstances supporting "Ryan's complete innocence."

Under the joint drug agreement between baseball teams and the players' association, Braun will have to prove "the presence of a prohibited substance in his urine was not due to his fault or negligence."

As Braun tries to avoid a 50-game suspension, the burden is a heavy one to overcome. A baseball arbitrator has never ordered a suspension overturned following a grievance hearing.

The person did not know whether the hearing had concluded or whether it would extend into at least one more session. Typically in grievances, after the hearing the sides may submit written final arguments before the arbitrator rules.

MLB has not confirmed the positive test. Baseball's drug agreement says first positive tests are not made public until after the appeals process has been completed.

Technically, the arbitration is before a three-person panel that also includes a representative of management and the union. The independent member, Das, is the decisive vote in nearly all cases.

Braun is to receive his MVP Award on Saturday at the annual dinner of the New York chapter of the Baseball Writers' Association of America. While he is expected to speak to the crowd from the dais in a hotel ballroom, he is not expected to take questions from reporters.

Braun has known about since the positive test since late October, people familiar with the appeals process said last month. If suspended, Braun wouldn't be eligible to play for the NL Central champions until May 31 at Dodger Stadium, barring any postponements. He would miss the first 57 days of the major league season, losing about $1.87 million of his $6 million salary.

The 28-year-old the 2007 NL Rookie of the Year, hit .312 with 33 homers and 111 RBIs last season and led Milwaukee to the NL championship series, where the Brewers lost to the eventual World Series champion St. Louis Cardinals.

Indians' Carmona arrested for false identity

CLEVELAND (AP)—From year to year and game to game, the Cleveland Indians never knew what to expect from Fausto Carmona.

On Thursday, he stunned them again.

Carmona, the Indians' opening-day starter last season, was arrested in the Dominican Republic for allegedly using a false identity. Officials in his native country are contesting his real name and birthdate.

Police spokesman Maximo Baez Aybar said Carmona was arrested in Santo Domingo outside the U.S. consulate, where he had gone to renew his visa. Carmona had played winter ball in the Dominican as he prepared to report to the Indians' training camp in Goodyear, Ariz., next month.

At this point, his future with the club is uncertain.

Aybar said Carmona's real name is apparently Roberto Hernandez Heredia and he's 31, three years older than the pitcher claimed. The Indians list Carmona's birthday as Dec. 7, 1983, in their 2011 media guide.

"We were recently made aware of the situation that occurred today in the Dominican Republic and are currently in the process of gathering information," Indians general manager Chris Antonetti said. "We are not prepared to make any additional comment at this time."

Carmona's agent said he was caught off-guard by the arrest and that there are Dominican lawyers working on the player's behalf. He did not disclose the names of the lawyers.

"This took us by complete surprise," agent Jay Alou said. "What we have to do now is wait to find out the process that has to be done with the consulate with this new identity in order to see if he can get a new work visa."

Carmona's arrest is the second involving a major leaguer in four months in a false identity case. Miami Marlins reliever Leo Nunez was arrested in September. Last month, an apologetic Nunez said he falsified his identify when he was young so he could play professional baseball. Nunez's real name is Juan Carlos Oviedo and he's 29, a year older than listed in the Marlins' media guide.

Carmona's career in Cleveland has been one of extremes.

After going 1-10 in 2006, the right-hander with a wicked slider came out of nowhere to win 19 games in 2007, shocking the Indians who had briefly experimented with him as a closer. Carmona, though, followed up with a disappointing 2008 season, and in 2009 the club sent him to the lower minors to work on his mechanics.

Carmona rebounded to win 13 games in 2010 in manager Manny Acta's first season. Although he went just 7-15 last season, Carmona stayed healthy, didn't miss a start and was expected to be part of the starting rotation this season. The Indians picked up his $7 million option for 2012 in October.

The Indians signed Carmona to a four-year contract in 2008. The club has options on him for 2013 at $9 million and 2014 at $12 million.

Cleveland signed Carmona as a free agent in 2000.

Jets owner backs Sanchez, doesn't rule out Manning

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. (AP)—Mark Sanchez is still the New York Jets' quarterback of the future.

Well, at least for now.

Owner Woody Johnson supported his embattled quarterback while meeting with writers who regularly cover the team Thursday for the first time since the Jets finished 8-8 and failed to make the playoffs.

But, he also wouldn't rule out the possibility of pursuing a veteran such as Peyton Manning if the Indianapolis Colts star became available.

"I'm not going to ever tell you guys what we may or may not do," Johnson said in a 30-minute far-ranging interview.

"Our job, and my job for the fans, is to take this team to the very top level, and I've said that from the beginning. And I have a lot of confidence that we can do it. So, we're going to look at everything. We're going to look at every possibility, and that's what you'd want us to do."

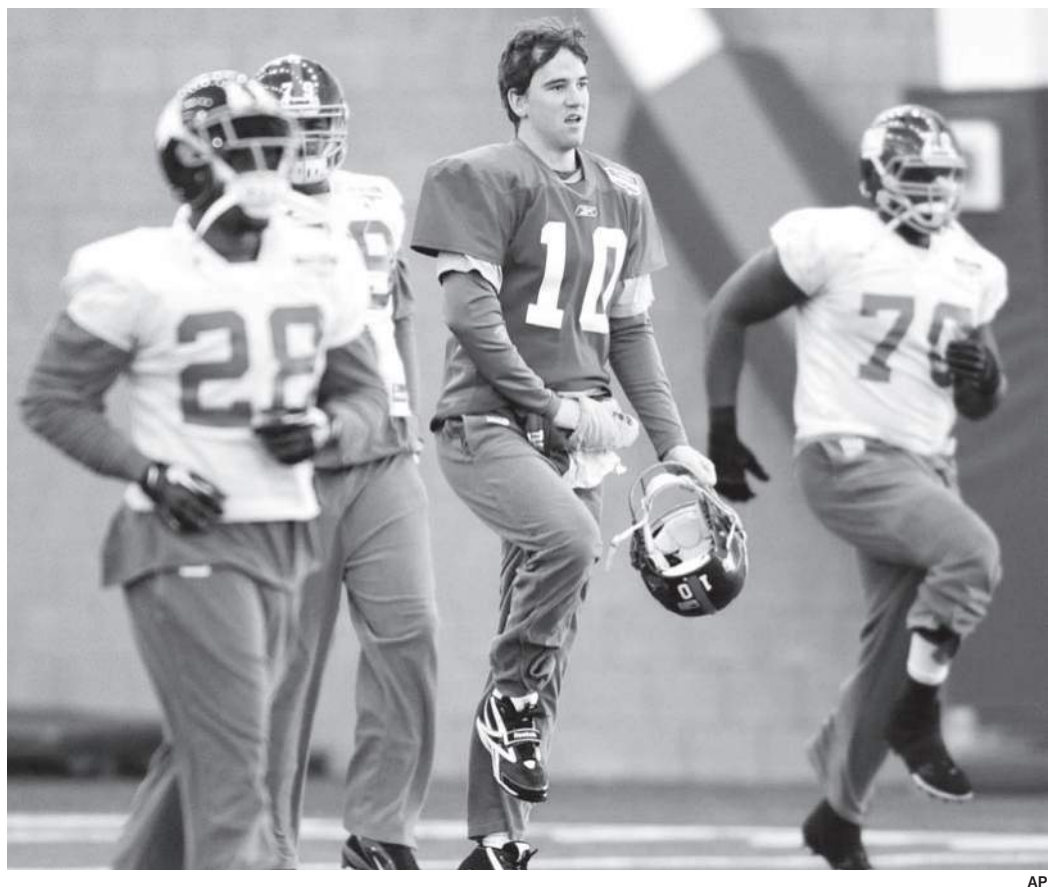
Johnson said "there's no such thing as 100 percent" when asked if Sanchez would definitely be the starter next season.

"Barring whatever," he said, "yes."

That "whatever" could be the status of Manning, who missed the season after a few operations on his neck.

He's still a highly unlikely possibility for Rex Ryan's Jets since he's still under contract to the Colts, is 10 years older than the 25-year-old Sanchez and would be a tough fit financially for New York.

But the fact Johnson didn't completely slam the door on the idea of Manning joining his brother Eli as quarterbacks in New York could keep the rumor mill spinning in the offseason. Johnson did sound later as though the franchise is thinking about Sanchez for the long term.



AP

New York Giants quarterback Eli Manning loosens up during an NFL football practice Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012, in East Rutherford, N.J.

"With Mark, you have a 25-year-old quarterback that you can develop," he said. "You can have a quarterback for 10 years with a guy like this. These guys are not available everyday.

"We have a lot of confidence in Mark. We think he's our guy. We're blessed that we have a guy that we feel can climb the ladder and he can do everything. He's got the work ethic and has all the ingredients in place to be a great quarterback."

Johnson indicated that new offensive coordinator Tony Sparano no taking the reins from the departed Brian Schottenheimer could help Sanchez. Sparano, hired last week, said he wanted the offense to be "explosive," but also wanted a focus on running the ball—as the Jets did in Sanchez's first two seasons.

"My feeling is that Mark is the kind of guy that will learn from this and get better," Johnson said. "We are going to try to make the offense maybe a little bit more suitable to what Mark's development is."

He added that the blame shouldn't be placed all on Sanchez, despite his lousy finish, but agreed that he might need a backup who could help challenge him.

"He's got to have somebody breathing on his back, yeah, I think you could argue that," Johnson said.

Johnson also is "concerned but I'm confident" that the fractured relationship between Sanchez and wide receiver Santonio Holmes can be mended.

Holmes was highly critical of the offensive line during the season and clearly had some tension with his quarterback.

It all came to a head in the season finale at Miami when Holmes was benched late in the game after arguing with teammates in the huddle.

"They've won a lot of games together and one is good for the other," Johnson said. "Santonio makes the quarterback a lot better and vice versa. So they have a good reason to iron this thing out and I think they can do it."

Johnson acknowledged that he might sit down with the two, either individually or together, at some point. While he added that Holmes will definitely be back, the Jets are tied to Holmes financially after they gave him a five-year, $45 million deal last offseason—something the owner doesn't regret.

"He may be one of the best players we've ever had here," said Johnson said, who added that he was troubled by the perception that Holmes quit on the team as the season ended.

"I have a good relationship with Santonio," Johnson said. "He's going to have a fresh start this year and I think he'll take advantage of it. He knows it's important to him, it's important to us."

Johnson also disputed LaDainian Tomlinson's claim on Showtime's "Inside The NFL" that the Jets had the worst locker room tension he has ever seen, saying the running back might have overstated things.

"I didn't feel a toxicity in the locker room," Johnson said, adding that he'll talk to Tomlinson to clarify his statements.

"I hear what LaDainian (is saying). I respect LaDainian at the highest level, but I don't think the whole locker room was toxic. I think there were clearly a few players that had conflicts. ... Would you love to have total harmony? Maybe. But maybe it's good to have a little bit of disharmony also. But they have to care about each other."

Ryan has said that he felt he never really had the pulse of the locker room, and many—including Tomlinson—think the coach's brash approach, along with general manager Mike Tannenbaum, set the tone for what took place. Johnson supported the aggressive style, saying it is more of a positive when building a team.

"The great thing about Rex as opposed to people not like Rex, is that he has a very healthy ego," Johnson added. "It's very healthy. He realizes that being a great coach requires admitting mistakes perhaps or changing or altering his style or management style or learning that we don't all grow up being great managers at age 40 whatever he is. Sometimes, it takes you a little longer and in most cases it does to be a good manager."

Johnson has spoken to Ryan about how the season unfolded, and believes the coach will keep improving.

"I think he realizes that he is the head coach," Johnson said. "He's a savant defensive guy, but he is a head coach. He has responsibility for the whole room and I think he will be a lot more involved and take a bit of a different management approach to that, I would suspect. Not because I told him to, but because I think he has figured this out."

Eli Manning returns to practice after 1-day bug

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—Tough luck, Frisco fans. Eli Manning's tummy is just fine.

The New York Giants quarterback was back at practice Thursday after missing part of the previous day's workout with "a stomach bug."

"I'm 100 percent," Manning said after practicing for Sunday's NFC title game against the 49ers in San Francisco. "I had a full practice today, did everything, took every rep. I feel good."

Manning felt sick after waking up Wednesday. He "toughed it out" and attended team meetings and took part in the walk-through portions of practice before letting backup David Carr handle the live snaps.

"It wasn't going well so I tried to be smart," said Manning, who received intravenous fluids after leaving practice Wednesday. "It was fortunate it happened on a Wednesday and not later in the week."

Manning texted coach Tom Coughlin late Wednesday evening and told him he was feeling better.

"When he got to work today, he had a nice breakfast and seemed to do fine," Coughlin said. "He is not quite himself, but almost."

There was almost no chance Manning would miss the game because of a stomach virus. After all, his streak of 128 straight starts, including playoffs, is tops in the NFL.

A shoulder injury in 2007 didn't sideline him and a foot injury two years later couldn't keep him off the field.

Manning took over as the active leader in consecutive quarterback starts at the beginning of the season when his brother, Peyton, was sidelined after neck surgery.

Manning downplayed his illness and the fuss it created. It marked the first time this season that he was listed on the team's injury report.

"I didn't watch too much TV so I didn't see the attention it was getting," he said. "You know, when you get into big games like this any little thing that pops up people make a big deal about. We can put it behind us now and focus on the game."

Kevin Gilbride said that Manning took great offense when the offensive coordinator told him he looked pale before practice Thursday.

Manning shot back that's the way he always looks in the winter.

"We did everything with him," Gilbride said. "Maybe we slowed down a couple of the drills between our work sessions, where the defense is up and we normally do a lot of drills. We did a couple, not quite as many. For the most part. He participated in everything and did everything we normally do."

For much of the season, Manning has carried the Giants. He threw for a career-best 4,933 yards. His 29 touchdown passes and 92.9 percent quarterback rating were the second highest in his eight NFL seasons. Six of the Giants' nine wins in the regular season came in games in which he engineered fourth-quarter drives.

Tackle David Diehl said there has been a little bug going around.

"We're just glad he's back out here, and ready to go," Diehl said. "We're not surprised. We're sure he was sitting there breaking down film while resting and getting ready for today. We know that he is going to do everything he can to be prepared for this one."

Manning took every snap for the Giants this season. He also has taken most of the snaps in practice, while Carr directs the scout team during the defensive portions of practice.

Carr said that Manning's absence was not a big deal since he knows the offense as well as anyone on the team.

Mario Manningham, took it a step further, saying since there was nothing wrong with Manning's hands or arm, everything was fine.

"I'm sure his wife took good care of him," Diehl added.

Brady practices after missing Wednesday

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—Tom Brady is back practicing. Everyone associated with the New England Patriots is acting like he never missed a snap.

Brady returned to the field Thursday after being out the previous day resting his left, non-throwing shoulder. If it's a big deal to the football world that the Patriots' star quarterback briefly was sidelined four days before the AFC championship, his teammates and coach treated it as an inconsequential blip.

So did the two-time league MVP.

"It's not the first practice I have missed over the years," Brady said with a shrug of his shoulders—including the sore left one. "When coach feels its best that you do other things to get yourself ready, that's what you do, and you still use all that time very wisely. When your coach feels it is best to do other things to get yourself ready, that is what you do."

Coach Bill Belichick revealed little about Brady's absence on Wednesday, lumping it in with every other player in the NFL who gets nicked. Then again, Belichick doesn't give out much information or insight on anything injury-related. Ever.

New England hosts the Baltimore Ravens for the AFC championship on Sunday.

Brady missed one practice and was limited for two others during the final week of the regular season, but he played all but the final offensive series in a 49-21 win over Buffalo. Last Saturday, he played every New England offensive series in a 45-10 divisional playoff win over Denver after being on the injury list but practicing in full all week.

The quarterback stretched and ran a few drills Thursday during the 15 minutes the media were allowed access to the session. He ran with the ball in his left arm as backup quarterback Brian Hoyer half-heartedly attempted to knock it out. Brady showed no signs of being in pain.

The day before, Brady had to find ways to keep himself occupied during the missed session.

"You don't go lounging around taking naps or anything like that," he said with a chuckle. "You just try to do other things to get yourself ready to go. So catch up on your film work and get some extra treatments and so forth. It's just a matter of ultimately we're trying to be as prepared as we can for Sunday. I'm certainly going to be as prepared as I possibly can be.

"It's not the first practice that I've missed over the years. You come off a game Saturday or Sunday and you're just doing everything you can to be prepared. You're just putting in extra work and making sure you're getting prepared."

Then Brady promised to be out on the field, and a while later he was.

Federer, Nadal into 4th round at Australian Open

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	10	4	.714	–
New York	6	8	.429	4
Boston	5	8	.385	4 1/2
New Jersey	4	11	.267	6 1/2
Toronto	4	11	.267	6 1/2

Southeast Division

Atlanta	11	4	.733	–
Orlando	10	4	.714	1/2
Miami	10	4	.714	1/2
Charlotte	3	12	.200	8
Washington	2	12	.143	8 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	13	3	.813	–
Indiana	9	4	.692	2 1/2
Cleveland	6	7	.462	5 1/2
Milwaukee	4	9	.308	7 1/2
Detroit	3	12	.200	9 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	10	5	.667	–
Dallas	9	7	.563	1 1/2
Memphis	7	6	.538	2
Houston	8	7	.533	2
New Orleans	3	12	.200	7

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	12	3	.800	–
Denver	10	5	.667	2
Utah	9	5	.643	2 1/2
Portland	8	6	.571	3 1/2
Minnesota	6	8	.429	5 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Clippers	8	4	.667	–
L.A. Lakers	10	6	.625	–
Phoenix	5	9	.357	4
Golden State	5	9	.357	4
Sacramento	5	10	.333	4 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Houston 90, New Orleans 88, OT
Miami 98, L.A. Lakers 87
Dallas 94, Utah 91

NBA LEADERS

SCORING

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Bryant, LAL	15	170	106	462	30.8
James, MIA	11	119	84	325	29.5
Anthony, NYK	12	103	88	313	26.1
Durant, OKC	14	127	86	364	26.0
Love, MIN	13	104	100	333	25.6
Ellis, GOL	11	95	58	261	23.7
Griffin, LAC	10	94	42	231	23.1
Aldridge, POR	13	120	54	295	22.7
Bargnani, TOR	11	89	56	245	22.3
Rose, CHI	13	93	64	271	20.8
Westbrook, OKC	14	103	57	272	19.4
Howard, ORL	12	85	63	233	19.4
Bosh, MIA	12	90	47	230	19.2
Lee, GOL	11	88	34	210	19.1
Jefferson, UTA	11	91	24	206	18.7
J. Johnson, ATL	14	93	45	259	18.5
Gay, MEM	12	93	26	220	18.3
Anderson, ORL	12	75	26	219	18.3
D. Williams, NJN	13	75	59	234	18.0
Paul, LAC	9	64	24	162	18.0

FG PERCENTAGE

	FG	FGA	PCT
Gortat, PHX	80	129	.620
Hawes, PHL	57	97	.588
Howard, ORL	85	146	.582
James, MIA	119	206	.578
Monroe, DET	89	156	.571
Millsap, UTA	82	148	.554
Horford, ATL	57	103	.553
Harrington, DEN	73	132	.553
White, CHA	62	113	.549
Chalmers, MIA	53	97	.546

REBOUNDS

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, ORL	12	45	132	177	14.8
Love, MIN	13	61	125	186	14.3
Bynum, LAL	11	43	110	153	13.9
Griffin, LAC	10	37	77	114	11.4
Varejao, CLE	12	56	79	135	11.3
Gasol, MEM	12	27	103	130	10.8
Lee, GOL	11	37	79	116	10.5
Haslem, MIA	12	32	90	122	10.2
McGee, WAS	13	41	90	131	10.1
Cousins, SAC	13	56	71	127	9.8

ASSISTS

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, PHX	11	111	10.1
Rondo, BOS	12	120	10.0
Calderon, TOR	14	127	9.1
Lowry, HOU	11	99	9.0
Rose, CHI	13	113	8.7
Paul, LAC	9	76	8.4
Rubio, MIN	13	108	8.3
D. Williams, NJN	13	107	8.2
Ellis, GOL	11	84	7.6
Parker, SAN	13	98	7.5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)— Roger Federer made the most of his rare opportunities Friday against the fastest serve in tennis, cashing in with some classic returns in a 7-6 (6), 7-5, 6-3 win over Ivo Karlovic to reach the fourth round of the Australian Open.

The four-time Australian Open champion fended off Karlovic's set point in the tiebreaker with a return that brought the 6-foot-10 Croatian to the net, then lobbed just over him.

"I knew going in it was going to be tough. I played him 10 times, and we've played some breakers. I knew it could come down to a few here and there," said Federer, who broke Karlovic once in each of the second and third sets. He only faced two breakpoints himself, including the pivotal one in the opening tiebreaker. "I definitely got a bit fortunate and started to play better as the match went on."

For his part, Karlovic thought it was "one in a 100 I'm gonna lose that point."

"It was unlucky," Karlovic said. "I didn't really expect him to do that. I was there, I just miscalculated how much I was jumping. If I would have won that, everything would be different but that's life."

Federer is now 10-1 against Karlovic and looking increasingly confident at Melbourne Park, where he has collected four of his 16 Grand Slam titles.

He and Rafael Nadal are on the same side of the draw at a major for the first time since 2005 and could meet in the semifinals.

Second-ranked Nadal had a 6-2, 6-4, 6-2 win earlier Friday over Slovakia's Lukas Lacko to advance without dropping a set or show any signs that a freak knee injury is bothering him.

Nadal, who won the 2009 Australian title but has gone out in the quarterfinals due to injuries in the last two years, felt a crack and then sharp pain in his right knee while sitting in a chair at his hotel on the weekend and was concerned that he might not be able to play in his opening match. Medical tests didn't show any serious damage, and he has had the knee heavily taped in his three matches since.

"The knee is fine. That's important thing," the 10-time major winner said. "The match was a really complete match, a really solid one.

"Very happy about my game. Being in fourth round without losing a set, it's fantastic news."

He will play either John Isner or Feliciano Lopez in the next round.

AP

Switzerland's Roger Federer makes a backhand return to Croatia's Ivo Karlovic during their third round match at the Australian Open tennis championship, in Melbourne, Australia, Friday, Jan. 20, 2012.

On the women's side, top-seeded Caroline Wozniacki continued her quest for a first major title with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Monica Niculescu of Romania and third-seeded Victoria Azarenka beat Mona Barthel 6-2, 6-4 in a match between champions of two warmup tournaments.

No. 8 Agnieszka Radwanska beat Kazakhstan's Galina Voskoboeva 6-2, 6-2 and will next meet No. 22 Julia Gorges, who beat Italian Romina Oprandi 3-6, 6-3, 6-1.

Wozniacki, who needs to reach the quarterfinals to have any chance of retaining the No. 1 ranking, wasted one match point and was broken when she was serving for the match, but broke back immediately to ensure she moved into the Round of 16.

Azarenka, who beat French Open champion Li Na to win the Sydney International last week, has only lost eight games at Melbourne Park and remains one of three women who can overhaul Wozniacki for the top ranking at the Australian Open.

The 22-year-old from Belarus will next meet Czech player Iveta Benesova, who beat Russian qualifier Nina Bratchikova 6-1, 6-3.

Barthel was on a 10-match winning run in Australia after capturing her first title at the Hobart International last week as a qualifier.

Barthel hit 20 winners—one more than Azarenka—but she was broken three times and failed to convert three break opportunities.

Azarenka was annoyed with herself for needing five match points to finish off Barthel, and for running out of challenges before she really needed to review a line call in the last game.

"I've been playing in the end not brave enough to finish the match ... I had to get a little," angry, Azarenka said.

Federer will play the winner of the match between Australian teenager Bernard Tomic, a Wimbledon quarterfinalist last year, and No. 13 Alex Dolgopolov. Both have a vastly different style to Karlovic, who broke Andy Roddick's record for the fastest serve ever in tennis by hitting one at 156 mph in a Davis Cup match last year.

"It's just because he's so tall and makes it unusual to return against," Federer said of the serve. "I've been around the block, faced some good ones."

Yet it unraveled twice when Karlovic needed it, in the tiebreaker and in the 12th game of the second set.

Karlovic was a point from forcing a second-set tiebreaker but Federer stepped it up, earning two set points with some trademark backhands and converting on the second when the tall Croatian netted a volley.

Roddick is already out of the tournament, retiring during his second-round match against Australian veteran Lleyton Hewitt late Thursday.

He needed a medical timeout after injuring his right hamstring in the second set and played 16 more games before finally retiring when Hewitt gained a 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 lead.

"It's a miserable, terrible thing being out there compromised like that," said Roddick, who is hoping to return within three weeks.

Hewitt, who turns 31 next month, goes to the third round against Milos Raonic, the big-serving, 21-year-old Canadian. If Hewitt eliminates an opponent who has dropped only two service games this year, he could face defending champion Novak Djokovic in the fourth round. Djokovic, who won three of the four major titles last year, kept getting better in his 6-3, 6-2, 6-1 win over Santiago Giraldo.

LADY

From Page 28

MHS' Johnson nabbed another assist to Alodia Lumasag six minutes into the start of the second half and minutes later found the back of the net herself to shift the Lady Dolphins into cruise control for the remainder of the contest.

With MHS clicking on all cylinders the way it has just two games into the season, its vie for a title defense seems to be already looming in the distance.

The season continues at the Oleai field at 4:30pm on Tuesday with SSHS taking on the MHS junior Lady Dolphins (0-2-0). Four teams make up this year's MISO girls soccer competition.

LATER

From Page 28

is around the Paupau parking area (two laps). Registration will begin as early as 5:30am and entrance fee is only $10.

Participants in the MTB bike race will pedal up to FEBC, Kimikaze and Autobahn trails, Santa Clause Lane, and Banzai before heading back to the starting/finish line. The MTB race is divided into three categories—open, beginners, and sport.

Bikers in the open MTB will negotiate the FEBC/Ayuyu Drive twice, while those entered in the sport course will go to FEBC, Kamikaze Trail, left to Grotto Road, left to Santa Claus Lane, Banzai Trail, and back to Paupau Beach. In the beginners course, participants will bike up to FEBC, turn left to Bird Island, make a U Turn to Grotto (Do not take Santa Clause Trail), Banzai Cliff, and back to the start/finish line.

Riders in the road bike category will cruise through the five corners—the Radar Tower, Suicide Cliff Lookout, Bird Island, Grotto, and Banzai—before returning to Paupau Beach.

After the race, organizers will award medals to the Top 5 finishers in each division. Two brand new mountain bikes will also be given away as raffle prizes. All proceeds from the weekend race will go to a group of SDA students (7th and 8th graders) for its educational trip this year.

For more information, contact Antonee at Saipan SDA Clinic at 234-6323 or Girlie at 285-1881. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

SGA January Ace tomorrow

The Saipan Golfers Association will hold its January Ace Tournament tomorrow, Jan. 22, at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort.

Show time is at 10am with tee off an hour later at 11am.

Returning and new members are welcome and encouraged to take part in the year's first monthly tournament of SGA.

For more information, contact SGA tournament director Nick Sablan, president Mariano Fajardo, vice president Larry Deleon Guerrero, treasurer Ed Sablan, secretary Frances Sablan, handicap director Ed Manibusan, or solicitation chair Steve Balakrishna. ***(SGA)***

Even ailing, James leads Heat past Lakers

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Sports

Jets owner backs Sanchez, doesn't rule out Manning

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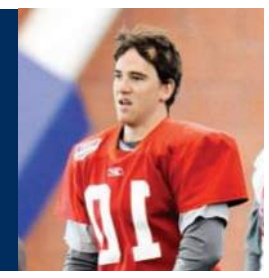

SIS1, MHS1 still lead girls volleyball

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan International School and Marianas High School's varsity squads remain atop the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization girls volleyball standings after the conclusion of matches Thursday at the MHS Gymnasium.

The SIS1 Lady Geckos brushed off the Lady Ayuyus of Kagman High School (1-3) in three sets, 25-16, 25-5, and 15-7 to stretch its unbeaten streak to four, while MHS1 (4-0) received a forfeit win off a no-show by Saipan Southern High School (0-4).

Meanwhile, the Grace Christian Academy Lady Eagles remained hot on their trail after sweeping the SIS juniors (SIS2), 25-12, 25-18, and 15-4.

GCA holds a win-loss slate of 3-0, while SIS2 dropped to an even 2-2 card.

In other results, the MHS juniors (MHS2) snuck past Marians Baptist Academy thanks largely to tardiness of the latter.

MBA's late arrival forced them to forfeit the opening set and MHS2 grinded out a 27-25 win in the second set before dropping the third set to MBA, 15-13.

MHS2 and MBA sit tied with KHS in the standings with identical 1-3 win-loss cards.

The season continues on Tuesday at 4pm with the SIS2 squaring off against KHS on the north court and MBA taking on the SIS varsity in the south end.

Then at 5pm, the MHS1 plays host to its MHS2 counterparts on the north square as GCA invites SSHS on the south side.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Grace Christian Academy's Michi Tenorio goes up for a spike against Saipan International School's junior squad in Thursday's Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization match held at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

A Marianas High School varsity forward, in yellow, weaves through a phalanx of Saipan Southern High School defenders for a point-blank shot on the goal in their Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization girls soccer match Thursday at the Oleai Sports Complex field.

Lady Dolphins rout Lady Manta Rays in soccer

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Marianas High School varsity Lady Dolphins bested the Lady Manta Rays of Saipan Southern High School, 4-0, in Thursday's Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization girls soccer match at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

MHS1's second win solidified its first place ranking in the standings, while SSHS now holds a loss and a draw on its card. The Kagman High School Lady Ayuyus are in second place with a 1-0-0 win-draw-loss slate.

Lady Dolphins forward Jeraldine Castillo scored on a penalty kick as a result of a handball in the goalie box about five minutes into the match and then netted a second goal in the final seconds of the first half off an assist by Melody Johnson.

The Lady Dolphins' strikers relentlessly attacked the Lady Manta Rays' defense for the majority of the match and let off a number of intense shots on goal.

See LADY on Page 27

Later start, kids race at SDA fundraiser

The Seventh Day Adventist School's MTB/Road bike fundraising race this Sunday will begin 30 minutes later than the original kickoff time.

Organizers said than instead of the 6:30am kick off, bikers will leave Paupau Beach at 7am. The change was made for the safety of the riders. Organizers added that they will also offer a race for kids and the course

See LATER on Page 27

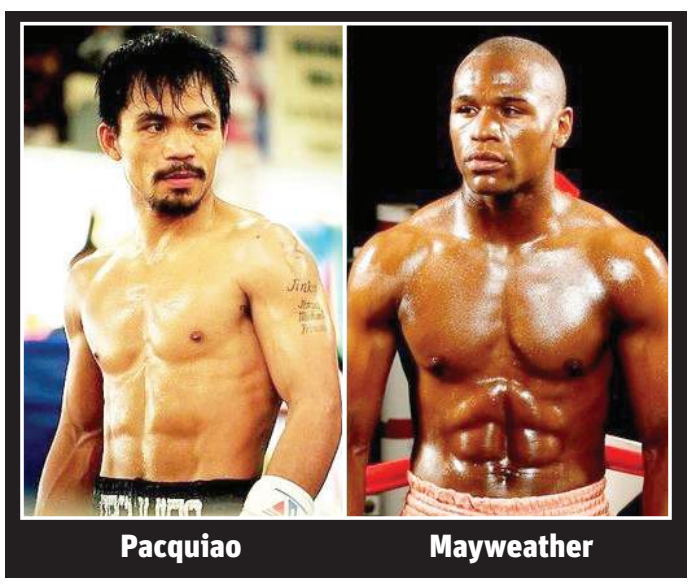
Mayweather is Plan A for Manny—Bob Arum

By ROY LUARCA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Revered promoter Bob Arum made it clear Monday—Manny Pacquiao's priority for his next fight is Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Other names being floated—Miguel Cotto, Timothy Bradley, Juan Manuel Marquez, Lamont Peterson—will only be considered after Mayweather is deemed unavailable.

Asked by Rick Reeno of BoxingScene.com as to whom Pacquiao prefers to tangle with other than Mayweather, Arum replied: "I am not authorized to talk about who it is because whoever it is, is Plan B. When they become Plan A, we'll talk about it.



Pacquiao Mayweather

"Plan A is Mayweather. We are locked and loaded on our side, we're ready."

In the same report, Arum, who conferred with Pacquiao regarding his choice from Jan. 3 to 7 in Manila, guaranteed Top Rank's and Pacquiao's 50 percent stake in the megabuck bout projected to enrich the protagonists by at least $50 million each.

Thing is, according to Arum, there's no clear signal from the camp of Mayweather, who earlier taunted and dared Pacquiao to a May 5 showdown, through his Twitter account.

Arum

The 80-year-old Arum, a Harvard-educated lawyer and boxing Hall of Famer, reiterated that all the flamboyant American needs to do is call and formalize who'll be representing him in the negotiations.

There are other obstacles to consider.

Mayweather's insistence for a May 5 fight date, a bigger share of the revenues and his three-month jail sentence which he'll stand serving on June 1 all serve as possible hurdles to the fight.

All Pacquiao wants is a 50-50 split in earnings for the fight, also projected to shatter Oscar De La Hoya-Mayweather's pay-per-view record set in 2007, to push through.

Due to the magnitude of Pacquiao-Mayweather, Arum wants the fight to be held late May and, if possible, June 9.

Arum is batting for an outdoor arena to be built along the Vegas strip that could accommodate approximately 45,000 and bring additional gate receipts of over $30 million.

If Pacquiao-Mayweather doesn't push through up to June, Arum envisions the unification bout to happen between the World Boxing Organization and World Boxing Council welterweight champions in November.